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ÚSTAV ANGLICKÉHO JAZYKA A DIDAKTIKY**

**Ecocritical Discourse Analysis of Corporate
Environmental Reports**

**Ekokritická analýza korporátního diskurzu o životním
prostředí**

DIPLOMOVÁ PRÁCE

Bc. Vladimír Novák

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Vedoucí práce:
PhDr. Pavlína Šaldová, Ph.D.

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Vladimír Novák

Abstract

This thesis investigates corporate environmental discourse by focusing on the language of corporate environmental reports. It seeks to find out more about how corporations talk about environmental problems and how they position themselves in relation to these. The theoretical underpinning draws from ecolinguistics, specifically ecocritical discourse analysis, which critically evaluates discourses on the environment. Environmental reports published by the company Toyota are analysed through corpus linguistic techniques which help to identify the salient concepts and then further scrutinize their textual environment to uncover the dominant discourse patterns. The analysis reveals that the aim of the reports is portray Toyota as a company which actively protects the environment, which confirms the PR nature of the reports. As a result, negative information or data are downplayed and the company distances itself from these by obliterating its role (through devices such as nominalisation, passive voice or intransitive verbs). Ecological problems as such are addressed rarely and serve more as a background for the company to improve its public image. If they occur in the reports, the link between the problems and human activity is not explicitly stated. The ecological problems are also discussed as business risk and opportunities, which confirms that the financial interest dominate the way the company addresses these issues.

Keywords: ecolinguistics, ecocritical discourse analysis, critical discourse studies, corpus linguistics, environment, ecology, corporate discourse

Abstrakt

Tato diplomová práce zkoumá korporátní diskurz o životním prostředí. Analýzou jazyka výročních zpráv na téma životního prostředí (tzv. environmental reports) se zaměřuje na to, jak korporace mluví o ekologických problémech a jak se samy k těmto problémům staví. Z teoretického hlediska práce vychází z ekolingvistiky, konkrétně z tzv. ekokritické diskurzivní analýzy, která kriticky zkoumá diskurzy o životním prostředí. Práce analyzuje výroční zprávy od automobilové společnosti Toyota pomocí metod korpusové lingvistiky, které umožňují identifikovat v textech hlavní koncepty a dále zkoumat jejich jazykový kontext, čímž se odhalí dominantní diskursní strategie. Analýza ukazuje, že cílem zpráv je zobrazit Toyotu jako společnost aktivně chránící životní prostředí, což potvrzuje, že výroční zprávy jsou nástrojem korporátního PR. Následkem toho se negativní informace a data vyskytují pouze okrajově, přičemž Toyota se od těchto informací distancuje použitím vybraných jazykových konstrukcí (jako je např. proces nominalizace, trpný rod či intransitivní slovesa) a v textu tak potlačí svou roli. O ekologických problémech jako takových se mluví výjimečně a slouží spíše jako nástroj, pomocí kterého si firma zlepšuje svou pověst. Pokud jsou ekologické problémy zmíněny, jejich spojitost s lidskou činností je opět v textu potlačena. O problémech se také mluví jako o finančních rizicích a příležitostech, což potvrzuje, že ekonomické zájmy diktují, jakým způsobem se korporace k environmentálním problémům staví.

Klíčová slova: ekolingvistika, ekokritická diskurzivní analýza, kritická diskurzivní analýza, korpusová lingvistika, životní prostředí, ekologie, korporátní diskurz

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List of Abbreviations

BNC	British National Corpus
CADS	corpus assisted discourse studies
CDA	critical discourse analysis
CDS	critical discourse studies
CL	corpus linguistics
CO ₂	carbon dioxide
CSR	corporate social responsibility
DA	discourse analysis
ECDA	ecocritical discourse analysis
FY	fiscal year
IPCC	International Panel on Climate Change
LVMH	Moët Hennessy Louis Vuitton
OED	Oxford English Dictionary
PR	public relations

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1. Introduction

Around the time I started writing this thesis, the Collins dictionary announced *single-use* as its word of the year 2018. It refers to products, primarily those made of plastic, which are used only once and then thrown away (“single-use,” n.d.). The Collins lexicographers chose this word as its frequency has increased four-fold since 2013 (Quin, 2018), primarily due to the widespread debate about the amount of disposable products which now litter the Earth.

I naturally welcomed this announcement as a kind of confirmation for this thesis, which fuses linguistic research with environmental concerns. The fact that *single-use* was identified by lexicographers as the word representing the year 2018 confirms that the extent of environmental destruction is now so large that it has become to permeate into other, seemingly unrelated areas as well. Although the rise of modern environmental movement can be traced to 1960s (Hansen, 2018) the events of the recent decades (which include catastrophic oil spills, record-breaking heatwaves and melting glaciers) have pushed the environmental concerns into the mainstream public debate. Unfortunately, the rise of general awareness has not necessarily entailed that the issue has been adequately addressed and dealt with.

The scientific consensus confirms that environmental change, which also includes climate change, the overarching and probably most pressing environmental threat of today, is occurring as a result of human activity (Newell, 2012). The UN Framework Convention on Climate Change thus defines climate change “a change of climate which is attributed directly or indirectly to human activity [...] and which is in addition to natural climate variability observed over comparable time periods” (IPCC, 2014). More generally, the term “Anthropocene” is now widely used to label a new geological epoch in the development of Earth which has been brought about by humankind (Steffen et al., 2011).

However, although it is now acknowledged that human activity is directly or indirectly responsible for many of the ecological problems, environmentalists point out that it is specifically the current socio-economic system of capitalism which underpins the environmental changes we are witnessing today (see, e.g, Newell, 2012, Parr, 2013 or Craig, 2017). Governments and international political organizations are usually singled out as those who have the responsibility to implement the necessary large-scale changes and individuals are encouraged to minimize their environmental footprint. Yet if we accept the environmentalist critique that the environmental degradation goes hand in hand with the rapid economic expansion enabled by capitalism and globalization, another key player whose

role should be considered are corporations. As an essential part of the current economic system (Breeze, 2013), corporations can also manifest its shortcomings.

Wright and Nyberg (2015) provide a detailed account of the link between corporations and climate change, pointing out to the “dual role” business plays in climate politics. As they note, corporations can directly harm the environment and shape the larger political and social response to the problem, yet at the same time, they are often seen as providing the solutions to ecological problems through technological innovation (ibid). Under the increasing public pressure, corporations now address the problems by producing their environmentally focused discourses. However, due to the share of power corporations have under the current system, the corporate discourses can shape the broader public discourse to corporate needs and benefits. As far as environmental problems are concerned, this can have crucial impacts on how (or whether) these problems are addressed and solved.

For these reasons, investigating the corporate discourses on the environment is essential and I suggest that this is a space where linguistics can step in and provide us with a better insight – a linguistic research can analyse the communicative activities of a corporation to see in what terms it addresses the ecological problems. A critically oriented research is now an established part of linguistics, yet a relatively recent branch of applied linguistics adopts this approach specifically to investigate language with respect to its relationship to the environmental degradation. It has become known as ecolinguistics and my thesis will derive from this approach to language research, specifically from one of its strands known as ecocritical discourse analysis (ECDA).

To investigate how corporations talk about environment issues, I suggest that one of the suitable sources of data to look at are corporate environmental reports – they provide the most concise summary of the company’s environmental agenda aimed at the public and contain the most recent information, being usually published on yearly basis. Besides this, these reports have another specific aim – they represent a kind of promotional discourse the purpose of which is to present the company in a positive light (i.e. as a green company). For a critically oriented study, these reports thus represent an interesting source of data in which we can trace corporate attempts to merge often opposing aims and ideologies (e.g. the necessity of environmental protection vs the emphasis on the economic growth), with the environmental concerns cleverly disguising PR efforts to paint the company in bright colours and appease the concerned public.

A critical analysis of discourse is motivated by pressing social (and ecological) issues, attempting to investigate how discourse can reflect and further contribute to these problems. As was suggested above, in the context of the environmental change a clear identification of the main actors and their degree of responsibility is crucial if the issues are to be tackled successfully. For this reason, I argue that an analysis of corporate environmental communication should focus primarily on the strategies used by the corporations to present their role in the process.

In this research, I will thus focus on the following: **Examining the language of corporate environmental reports, I will investigate the corporate environmental discourse and what aims this discourse might have.** More specifically, I will investigate the following questions: **How do corporate environmental reports portray the environmental problems and how do they represent the corporation in relation to these issues?**

Before discussing what answers the study reveals, it is necessary to describe in more detail the theoretical framework underpinning the research. The following chapter will thus provide an overview of ecolinguistics as an approach to language research which emphasizes the embeddedness of language in the environment. Fuelled by environmental concerns, ecolinguistics believes it is crucial to analyse environmental discourses as they can encourage us to protect or further contribute to destroying the environment (Stibbe, 2018).

To shed more light on the material which will be analysed, I will also look briefly at corporate discourse. The aim is to emphasize the significance of corporate discourse in today's society and to discuss the specific nature of corporate environmental communication.

Chapter 3 will focus in detail on the data collection and the methodology used in the analyses. The environmental reports which provide the data for the analysis were downloaded from the website of the car manufacturer Toyota. Toyota was chosen as a representative of the automotive industry which often faces criticism for its contribution to the environmental problems.

The methodology selected for this research draws from corpus linguistics (CL) which uses electronically stored bodies of texts for the study of language. Since this research is focused on the discourse, it could be said to derive from corpus-assisted discourse studies (CADS) which fuse the methods provided by CL with the aims of discourse analysis (DA). The analysis will start with a more quantitative-oriented approach, looking at the most frequent

words and most salient keywords related to the question of how corporations talk about the environmental issues and about themselves in relation to these problems. This step will be followed by a more-qualitative oriented analysis which will investigate the words in more detail by looking at their collocates and the concordance lines in which they occur.

The results of the analyses will be discussed in Chapter 4 and the thesis will then conclude with a final summary (Chapter 5) of the main findings, hopefully revealing more about how and to what aim corporations communicate their environmental concerns and discussing what impact these discourses might have.

2. Theoretical background

2.1. Ecolinguistics

At first sight it might not seem clear how the study of language can contribute to the debate around environmental protection, let alone help prevent environmental problems. It is true that traditionally linguistics has been “an inward-looking discipline” (Jaworski & Coupland, 2005: 4), focusing on the inner rules of the language (such as morphology) which seemed of little relevance to other social sciences. However, this kind of language research can lead to isolating language as a separate, autonomous entity, while ignoring the relationship of language and its communicative function (Wright, 2001) and, largely, the social environment.

Among those challenging this view was, for example, William Labov, the pioneer of sociolinguistics, who emphasised the importance of language as being embedded in society (Stibbe, 2014). M.A.K. Halliday also recognized the importance of social context, highlighting the social functions of language as central to determining its grammatical structures. More generally, the broadening of the perspective on what a linguistic research could (or should) include occurred as the focus shifted from what was traditionally understood as language to the examination of discourse, which could be defined here as “language use relative to social, political and cultural formations (Jaworski & Coupland, 2005: 3).¹

The rise in the interest in discourse is inherently related to the so-called ‘linguistic turn’ which refers to a shift in the general theorising of knowledge, as a result of which language, rather than being seen as neutral tool for the transmission and receiving of knowledge, began to be seen as a constitutive part of that knowledge (ibid.: 4). Language has thus come to the attention of other fields of social sciences, which also meant that the study of language could become engaged with wider social issues.

However, the conceptualization of the relationship between language and ecological concerns could be seen as a result of a double-sided turn, stemming not only from the general linguistic turn, but also from what Stibbe (2014) calls an ‘ecological turn’. As he notes, the large-scale environmental destruction of the recent decades has led many to reconsider the role of the environment in areas which are seemingly distant from those of environmental protection. This has resulted in “a larger ecological turn within social sciences

¹ The distinction between the traditional notion of language and discourse is discussed further in section 2.3.1.

which includes ecopsychology, ecofeminism, ecocriticism or ecopoetry. All of these disciplines incorporate ecological aspects partly to better understand the phenomenon in question and partly to enable the academic discipline to play an active role in addressing key socio-ecological issues” (Stibbe, 2014: 584). One of the fields in which the ecological turn has gained its ground is that of linguistics.

2.1.1. A brief historical overview

Although being a relatively recent discipline, the roots of ecolinguistics can be traced into 19th century - Wilhelm von Humboldt’s work on comparative linguistics and his emphasis on the interdependency of language and the world is now regarded as its earliest predecessor (Chen, 2016). Humboldt’s ideas were later embraced by the advocates of the so-called linguistic relativity hypothesis, most famously by Edward Sapir and Benjamin Whorf. Their (albeit controversial) theory of how speaker’s perception of the world is conditioned by the language they use “can be seen as the first explicit attempt to theorize the complex relations between languages and their surrounding contexts” (ibid.:109). However, it was Einar Haugen’s speech titled “Ecology of the language” (1972) which is regarded as the beginning of ecolinguistics as we understand it today.

As the title of the talk suggests, Haugen conceptualizes language through the lenses of ecology. OED defines ecology as “the branch of biology that deals with the relationships between living organisms and their environment, [including] the relationships between the organisms themselves” (“ecology, n.” 2018). Haugen thus applies the relational aspect of ecology to define language ecology as “the study of interactions between any given language and its environment” (Haugen, 2001: 57). Ecology of language(s) draws attention to the fact that the gradual process of globalisation has established a few languages as dominant and forced many local languages into a marginalized position, almost to the point of extinction. It thus draws a clear parallel between the loss of language diversity and the loss of biological diversity, which has also seen the extinction of many species at the expense of one dominant species - humans. The main concepts discussed in this strand of ecolinguistics are those of language diversity, language endangerment and language death and their possible connection to biological diversity, species endangerment and extinction (Fill, 2018).

Another major step in the development of ecolinguistics, which has brought it to its current state, was M.K. Halliday’s talk titled “New Ways of Meaning”, given in 1990 (Chen, 2016). It

is important to note that it was Halliday's status in the linguistic community which helped ecolinguistics to gain a wider recognition.

Halliday made here an explicit connection between language and its role in the environmental degradation, arguing that "there is a syndrome of grammatical features which conspire [...] to construe reality in a certain way; and it is a way that is no longer good for our health as a species" (Halliday, 1992: 84). He then goes on to discuss what could be termed as "anthropocentrism" of the language (Fill, 2001). In this context, anthropocentrism can be defined as "a philosophical view which categorizes nature primarily or even exclusively in terms of its usefulness to human beings" (Heuberger, 2018: 342). Although it is inevitable that language is by its very nature anthropocentric, Halliday recognizes that the exclusively anthropocentric perspective ingrained in the language (or, more specifically, English) is linked to the devastating exploitation of the Earth and its resources. This is manifested both in the grammatical structure of the language itself and in the discourses related to the environmental issues. Halliday's ideas have constituted the main points of departure for future development of ecolinguistics and as such they will be discussed further below as current directions of the ecolinguistic research.

2.1.2. Definition and directions

It can be difficult to provide a unified comprehensive definition of ecolinguistics, as it serves as an umbrella term for related, yet different approaches towards language research, and even researchers working in this field would not agree on what ecolinguistics actually is (Chen, 2016).

As suggested above, ecolinguistics expands the focus of sociolinguistics in recognizing that "language is embodied, i.e. embedded in beings who have bodies [but it goes even further and claims] that humans, human bodies, and human society are all embedded in larger natural systems – the complex interactions of humans, plants, animals, and the physical environment" (Stibbe, 2014: 584). The acknowledgement that humans are an integral part of these systems (Alexander, 2018: 197), instead of standing beside or above them, is crucial to understand why ecolinguistics draws a relationship between language and the environment.

We could thus say that ecolinguistics "deals with the role of language concerning the environment (in its biological/ecological sense). In other words, ecolinguistics deals with the

impact of language and discourse in describing, but also aggravating and perhaps alleviating, environmental problems” (Fill, 2018: 3).

Following Fill (2018) we could divide the current ecolinguistic research into three complementary (and sometimes overlapping) directions: **the ecology of language(s)** (discussed above as Einar Haugen’s language ecology), **ecological and unecological elements in the language systems** and **ecocritical discourse analysis**. I will briefly describe the second direction (ecological and unecological elements in the language system) and then I will focus in more detail on the ecocritical discourse analysis as it serves as the primary theoretical underpinning of this thesis.

Research into un/ecological elements of the language systems might appear to constitute a more traditional linguistic approach in that it scrutinizes the structure of the language itself. However, unlike traditional linguistics, it is fuelled by ecological concerns. The catalyst moment for this movement was Halliday’s “New ways of meaning” (mentioned above) in which he criticizes the destructive anthropocentrism and the way it manifests itself in the language. To illustrate his point Halliday (1990) discusses several aspects of the English grammar in which this tendency can be traced.

First, he mentions what he calls the “growthism” of the grammar which is apparent if we consider words such as *grow*, *big*, *fast* etc. These words are not only seen as carrying positive connotations, but they also function as neutral terms (e.g. when inquiring about the size, the default question is “How big is it?”, not “How small is it?” (Fill, 2001). On the other hand, words such as *fall*, *shrinkage*, *small* or *slow* mark negative connotations. Growth and expansion are thus automatically positioned as desirable, even though they often occur at expense of the natural environment.

Halliday also talks about “the notion of unbounded resources” which manifests itself in the use of words such as *water*, *land* or *soil* as uncountable nouns, which suggests they are unlimited resources which can be used indefinitely. Another aspect apparent in the language is “the passivity of the inanimate environment”. This can be spotted in transitive constructions which tend to present humans as active doers, while inanimate objects are portrayed passively as having things done to them, despite the fact they also carry out some kind of action (e.g. forests preserve water in the soil, capture carbon from the atmosphere, produce oxygen, etc.). Finally, Halliday addresses the dichotomy human vs. nonhuman which emphasizes “the uniqueness of humankind instead of our continuity with the rest of creation”. In the pronominal system, for example, humans are referred to with pronouns

he/she, while animals and other living creatures (unless they are pets) are usually referred to as *it*.

Halliday's ecologically motivated research into the grammar of the language has sparked interest in ecologically motivated investigation of discourse, which, following Fill (2018), will be referred to as ecocritical discourse analysis (ECDA) here. As this approach serves as the theoretical framework for my research, it is addressed in a separate section below.

2.1.3. Ecocritical discourse analysis

Research into un/ecological elements of the language is primarily concerned with the language system and its structure - it recognizes its flaws, but it is also aware that as a system the language manifests a complex historical development. ECDA, on the other hand, is concerned with discourse, which, we could argue, is more fluid and thus possibly more malleable.

As was mentioned above (section 2.1.), the rise of the interest in discourse is linked to the reconsideration of the role of language across social sciences. As a result, the term discourse has been adopted in various academic fields and is now loaded with multitude of definitions. If we adopt the "functional approach" (Partington, 2013: 2) to discourse, we can define it as "language-in-use" (Blommaert, 2005: 2) or, in other words, "actual instances of communicative action in the medium of language" (Johnstone, 2008: 2). Some expand the focus beyond verbal communication and see discourse as "all kinds of meaningful semiotic activity" (Blommaert, 2005: 2).

In comparison to a more traditional linguistic analysis, which would focus on the description of language forms irrespective of the purposes or functions these forms serve in human affairs (Partington, 2013) discourse analysis can be said to "examine patterns of language across texts and consider the relationship between language and the social and cultural contexts in which it is used" (Paltridge, 2012: 2).

The study of discourse can take different directions. It can be concerned only with a detailed textual analysis "to show how meaning is conventionally made through the choice and organization of language in specific contexts" (Breeze, 2013: 29). Other perspectives on discourse (such as CDS, discussed below) see it as an integral part of the social system, including its structures of social hierarchy and inequality. However, these approaches do not have to cancel each other out, as "there is a continuum extending from the surface of the

text, through the roles that this text performs in social contexts, to the structures and ideas that configure whole societies and there is two-way influence along this line” (Breeze, 2013: 30).

The reciprocal relationship between discourse and the social context is essential for understanding how discourse works. Besides being shaped by a particular social context, discourse also shapes this social context further. In other words, we could say that discourses which are dominant in the society rely on “conventional use of language” which creates and is created by “conventional ways of thinking” (Johnstone, 2008: 2). Discourse thus transcends the boundaries of what we usually see as language and becomes a kind of practice, a way of constructing the objects it talks about. As a result, we can talk about discourses (as a countable noun), as there as many discourses as there are objects and concepts they construct (Baker, 2006).

One of the most prominent approaches to discourse which, under the Foucaultian tradition, studies discourse in the wider social system is that of Critical Discourse Studies (CDS).² CDS, being an openly political approach, “seek to develop a critically contextualised approach to linguistics which identifies issues of ideology, power and inequality as central to [this] field of studies” (Flowerdew & Richardson, 2018: 1). CDS do not see language as a neutral tool of communication, but as being charged by the dominant political ideology. In practice, CD scholars often focus on how dominant discourses (e.g. media or political discourses) represent social groups marginalised by the dominant social structures and thus further reinforce and naturalize the prevailing ideology.

For a long time, CDS have focused on issues related to human rights and have failed to take into consideration problems related to the environment. However, besides the fact that environmental issues are escalating, it is becoming obvious that the key environmental problems (e.g. environmental justice, water scarcity or energy security) pertain to the social as well (Stibbe, 2018).

Expanding the focus of CDS, ECDA is concerned with “the ways in which issues of the environment are presented, be it in written, spoken or pictorial form” (Fill, 2001: 69). It “examines how particular groups in society select particular lexical items and grammatical

² The term ‘Critical Discourse Studies’ (CDS) is understood here as a more recent and superordinate term to ‘Critical Discourse Analysis’ (CDA). CDS stems from CDA, expanding the field of research and types of analysis that were typical for the main schools of CDA (Krzyżanowski & Forchtner, 2016). In this paper I will be using the term CDS, the exceptions being ‘ECDA’ (the term ‘ecocritical discourse studies’ does not seem to be used by scholars) and direct quotations which use the term CDA.

structures from those available and combine them in particular ways to tell stories about the world” (Stibbe, 2018: 499).

Stibbe understands the term ‘stories’ here as “underlying cognitive models that manifest themselves in the text and exist in the minds of individuals or across the minds of multiple individuals in society. Stories that are common within a culture are the stories we live by and influence how people think, talk and act, with a consequent impact on how we treat ecosystems that life depends on.” (ibid.: 502) Ecolinguistics thus recognizes why it is crucial to critically investigate the dominant discourse on the environment. Being so widespread, these discourses not only manifest our relationship towards the environment, but also have the power to construct particular images and attitudes which can encourage us to either protect or further destroy the systems which support life.

In their effort to uncover the dominant underlying ‘stories’, ECD analysts have investigated a wide range of discourse types. These include media (e.g. how newspapers talk about ecological catastrophes), academic texts (e.g. how texts from the field of natural sciences portray animals) or economic and agribusiness discourses (e.g. how the environment is portrayed through the lenses of profit-oriented business).³

I suggest that it is precisely the discourses produced by corporations (and other business entities) that are worth our attention. If we accept the environmentalist critique that the economic system of capitalism and its key components, i.e. businesses, play one of the key roles in the environmental change, it becomes clear that their discourses require critical examination. Being aware of their responsibility, large corporations actively appropriate the environmentally focused communication, although often only to a symbolic degree, without any real change to the company’s practices (Jaworska, 2018). In the next section I will thus further illustrate the significance of corporate communication and the problems inherent to it.

³ For further examples of ECDA research, see Fill & Penz (2018).

2.2. Corporate discourse

In 2012, 51 out of 100 largest economic entities in the world were corporations and 49 were countries (Breeze, 2013). This number clearly demonstrates how powerful corporations are. They play vital roles in our everyday lives, their influence reaching to the way our countries are governed and public policies are shaped. However, despite being “a sector of public sphere where the most, and the most unequally distributed, power is amassed today” (Koller, 2010: 155), corporations have been largely overlooked by critical linguists (*ibid.*). And it is precisely due to its power that corporate discourse should not be taken at face value. As Breeze (2013) points out, “it is now understood that all of the company’s relationships [...] can and should be managed through discourse. Discourse is one of the corporation’s most powerful tools in the current configuration of society” (*ibid.*:178).

Corporate discourse could be broadly defined as “an overall communicative activity of the company on a variety of levels” (*ibid.*:23). This kind of activity can be internal (e.g. the discourse produced by the management aimed at the employees) or external – such communicative activity is usually aimed at the company’s stakeholders, which also include the general public.

External corporate communication does not merely serve to transfer factual information; it has another important goal which is to build a specific identity for the company. Corporate identity can be defined as “the firm’s own understanding of itself, the self-representation that a firm wants to give of itself to the public it addresses. [...] The corporate identity is created, expressed and replicated through discourse, and it is also performed through the actions and practices of the corporate entity and its members” (*ibid.*: 14).

The necessity of constructing a specific identity for the company is also a part of the corporate PR (public relations) agenda. Similarly to the genre of advertising, PR is a promotional activity which has very fuzzy edges and thus eludes an easy definition. According to Cook (2010), “prototypical PR emanates from a large business and is primarily intended to present that organisation in a favourable light” (*ibid.*: 115). PR has nowadays become so widespread that it can be hard to identify. Unlike traditional advertising, which is very open about its aim, PR often attempts to hide its purpose and it does so by permeating into different areas of communication (*ibid.*). As a result, PR has become a kind of hybrid genre which can take on various forms, depending on the mode of communication, and use various means to achieve its aims.

Through its PR activities a company builds and sustains a particular identity which will make it appealing to its stakeholders, but we must also be aware that “the construction of corporate identity is constrained by the external, profit-seeking goals of the corporate world, and that these may change from time to time as new economic problems or opportunities arise” (Breeze, 2013: 24). As was suggested above, this is clearly reflected in the way the pressure arising from the increasing environmental awareness has led corporations to go green and engage in the ecological debate. Nowadays it is therefore a standard practice for large corporations (including those which directly harm the environment, such as fossil fuel companies) to produce discourses the aim of which is to construct an eco-friendly image of the company.

2.2.1. Corporate environmental reports

Corporate discourse can be produced through a wide range of activities and corporations often resort to concrete practical steps to address the environmental concerns. These can range from financial support for wildlife conservation programmes to building green and eco-friendly office spaces.

Besides this, the corporate environmental communication has also resulted in establishing a new genre of environmental reports.⁴ These tend to be published at regular intervals (usually annually), summarizing the company's environment policies and providing an overview of its environmental performance.

Corporations publish these reports on a voluntary basis which, however, means that they have freedom to decide what to include, in how much detail and how to write about it (Jaworska, 2018). Being also a relatively recent genre, the reports are “heterogenous in their form and content, and the conventions are less stabilized” (Skulstad, 2010: 8).

It is important to remember that the reports' primary function is to enhance the company's PR. They usually contain factual data and figures (e.g. the amount of emissions the corporation released into atmosphere during the production process) which, on their own, may not give a positive image of the company. Despite this, the overall purpose of the report is to persuade its readers that the company actively addresses the ecological issues.

⁴ These reports can be published on their own or in a single document together with other activities subsumed under the company's CSR (corporate social responsibility) agenda. They can thus be called sustainability reports, social reports or CSR reports. For the sake of clarity, the term 'environmental report' will be used here.

Environmental reports can also be seen as a space in which corporations attempt to weave two ideologies which can be totally opposite in their aims - that of (unlimited) economic growth and that of primacy of environmental protection. The rift between these two is, in fact, central to the whole debate surrounding the idea of sustainability, which has been so widely embraced by companies. Sustainability itself has thus become “a contested and elusive concept” (Milne et al., 2006: 802), being frequently appropriated to serve specific purposes. While some see sustainability as “a need for radical reorganization and restructuring of the society along ecological principles” (ibid.: 802), for others following the more neoliberal approach it can be a mere attempt “to balance interest of economic development with environmental wellbeing” (Livesey, 2001: 59).

Although environmental reports can be difficult to pin down in terms of genre, for a better picture it might be useful to map out the features which are likely to be shared by corporate environmental reporting in general. Following the procedure suggested by Biber and Conrad (2009), a situational analysis of the genre was carried out (Table 1) to provide a brief overview which might facilitate the subsequent analysis of the reports.

Participants	
Addressor	<p>The addressor is institutional, i.e. the specific author(s) cannot be identified</p> <p>The reports are attributed to the corporation, yet the actual addressor is unclear – the reports might be produced internally (by the corporation’s PR and/or sustainability department) or by another commercial entity (a PR agency) hired and paid to write the reports</p>
Addressee	Stakeholders (investors, shareholders, suppliers, customers, media, general public...)
Relation between participants	No degree of interactiveness between the participants
Channel	
Mode	Written
Specific medium	<p>Usually published online, downloadable from the company’s website</p> <p>Could also be printed</p>
Production circumstances	Planned – the texts are revised and edited (it can be assumed that the wording of the reports is carefully structured to put the specific message across)
Setting	Time and place of production and reception are not shared by the participants
Communicative purpose	<p>Reporting on the environmental performance of the company, including describing and explaining the data</p> <p>Enhancing the public image of the company - promoting its green image</p> <p>Persuading the stakeholders of the company’s environmental commitment</p>
Topics	Environment, sustainability, CSR

Table 1: A situational analysis of the genre of corporate environmental reports

Being a concise and easy-to-access summary of corporate attitudes towards the environment, the genre of environmental reports has received attention from scholars.⁵ For instance, Milne et al. (2006) scrutinized the concept of sustainability in corporate discourse as a metaphor, claiming that the frequently used metaphor of sustainability as a journey diverts the attention from specifying what the final destination of sustainable transformation actually is. In another study, Milne and Gray (2013) found out that the corporate conception of sustainability is predominantly corporate-focused while environment tends to be sidelined.

A similar conclusion was reached by Ihlen and Roper (2014) whose study also showed that the sustainability discourse is very “corporate-centric”, the survival of the corporation being the highest priority. On the other hand, their research also revealed that corporations, rather than talking about moving towards sustainability, often present themselves as having had the principles of sustainability ingrained in their working for years, although such claims are highly doubtful.

Lischinsky (2015), using corpus linguistics, scrutinized the common claim that businesses now take environment seriously as one of its stakeholders. Yet his analysis reveals that in comparison to other stakeholders (such as employees or investors), environment is represented only as a passive object to which harm was done, without specifying the cause of the harm.

Jaworska (2018) narrows her focus by looking at the construction of climate change in environmental reports published by the largest oil companies. Her research shows that although the existence of climate change is accepted in the reports, the companies tend to use different distancing devices when talking about the phenomenon. For example, climate change is positioned as a threat which will be dealt with sometimes in the future. The causes of climate change are frequently omitted and when included, hedge words are used to weaken the links between climate change and the human activity. The necessity of

⁵ It is important to note here that not every environment-focused linguistic study of discourse needs to be labelled as ecolinguistic. In fact, none of the works mentioned in this section classifies itself as such.

This raises the question of whether ecolinguistics needs to be recognized as a distinct line of research or whether it should be seen as merely expanding other already existing approaches (such as CDS) by focusing on the issues of the environment. I argue that ecolinguistics is different from other approaches which examine the environmental discourse in that its motivation stems primarily from the environmental concerns and that at its core it aims to bring in a large-scale reconsideration of the environment and its role in our lives.

transformation in response to the changing climate is also further softened by foregrounding the economic demands of the industry (ibid.).

Methodologically, Jaworska's study demonstrates the merits of combining quantitative and qualitative linguistic analysis of salient lexico-grammatical patterns to reveal the underlying discourse strategies. Her work is thus closest to the approach adopted in this research, which also aims to investigate the dominant discourse patterns in environmental reports using the tools provided by CL. The precise methodology and the data analysed in this study will be described in more detail in the following section.

3. Data and methodology

3.1. Data collection

Unsurprisingly, the research into the corporate environmental reporting tends to target specifically fossil fuel companies (see, for example, Jaworska (2018) or Livesey (2001 and 2002)) as the largest environmental polluters. However, the aim here is to broaden the scope by looking at how other industrial sectors, the impact of which is also associated with the environmental damage, reflect the issue. I have selected the automotive industry for this research, as it often faces criticism for its environmental impact. As the majority of cars still rely on fossil fuels, driving cars releases harmful emissions into the atmosphere (e.g. greenhouse gases contributing to climate change, but also other substances, such as carbon monoxide, which contribute to smog formation). Besides this, car manufacturers use large amounts of energy and water in the production process and do not always dispose of end-of-life vehicles in a responsible manner (for more, see Nunes & Bennett, 2010).

The main criteria for the selection of the specific corporation was its prominence. The aim was to choose one of the largest corporations, which, due to its size, could be seen as representing the specific industrial sector. Another reason related to the size of the company is that the larger the corporation, the more likely it is to publish environmental reports. On this basis, Toyota was identified as a suitable company for this research. Originally a Japanese company, it is one of the largest car manufacturers in the world. In addition to this, it was also selected for being seen as the current market leader in the development of hybrid electric vehicles. It can thus be expected that Toyota will put emphasis on its environmental activities.

The environmental reports published by Toyota were downloaded from its global website (<https://www.toyota-global.com/company/>), specifically the section Sustainability which is clearly visible on the main webpage. The last three reports available were used in the analysis. They are titled *Environmental Report 2018/2017/2016 (Toward the Toyota Environmental Challenge 2050-)*.

After the reports were downloaded, the next step was to turn them into a corpus which could be later analysed in a corpus analysis software programme. The reports were downloaded in the default PDF format, which means that the data had to be copied and pasted into a separate document. A certain degree of selection had to be applied during this process. The environmental reports do not contain only the kinds of coherent longer texts suitable for a

corpus analysis; they also combine, among other things, numbers, figures, charts, diagrams, pictures and photographs.

It is important to note that the scope of what we now identify as discourse is not confined to verbal communication only (Baker, 2006). CD analysts tend to treat discourses as multimodal, i.e. they take into account all acts of communication which create and reproduce the discourse. In case of these reports, a multimodal analysis could also examine the visual layout of the reports, its colour schemes, photographs, but also the means of their production, distribution etc. Although undoubtedly desirable, a research of such scope would require a much wider range of approaches and methodological frameworks. Due to the limited space available, only the language data will be scrutinized here.

Another criterion applied was to select only those parts of the written texts which will still be understandable when viewed outside the context of the report in the corpus analysis programme. This means that they need to occur together with their co-text, their surrounding linguistic environment. The length of the selected pieces of texts varied, with some consisting of a single incomplete sentence and others spreading over several pages.

For example, if the report contained a table with a list of isolated words (e.g. a list of emissions in one column and the volume of these emissions released into the atmosphere in the second column), these words were not copied. A list of isolated words without the context of them being found in a table would render a corpus analysis of such a text difficult. However, when the report provided (as it usually did) a piece of coherent text which described the data presented in the table in more detail, this text was copied. These selection 'rules' were applied equally across the reports and as all the copying and pasting was carried out manually, I believe that consistency was maintained. For further illustration of the text selection, see a screenshot of one of the reports (Figure 1) in which the red frames denote the types of texts copied into the corpus.

The reports downloaded also contained appendices describing the methodology used and an assurance report provided by an independent party which evaluates the correctness of the data and their compliance with the methodology. Especially the assurance reports (which are carried out by other big corporations) undoubtedly contribute to the overall aim of the corporate discourse in that they provide a sense of objectivity and add credibility to the report and hence to the whole company. However, these appendices are of a more technical nature and as they are not produced directly by the authors of the environmental report, they were not copied into the corpus.

In the end, a Word document was created, containing selected texts copied from the three environmental reports. In the last step, the document was saved in a plain text format (.txt) which is necessary for it to be recognized by the corpus analysis software AntConc. The resulting corpus (which will be referred to as Toyota corpus) contains 52,832 word tokens.

Response to Scope 3

Scope 3 is a standard established to encourage corporations to visualize and account for indirect greenhouse gas emissions from the value chain that occur outside their own company and consolidated companies (purchased goods and services, transportation, business travel, employee commuting, use of sold products, etc.).

Comparison of the emission rates calculated according to this standard shows that the combined rate for Category 1 "Purchased goods and services" and Category 11 "Use of sold products" accounts for as much as 97 percent, while the rate for each other category is less than 1 percent.

Category 1 "Purchased goods and services" covers the manufacturing stage of the materials and parts that comprise automobiles, while Category 11 "Use of sold products" covers the driving stage of automobiles. Therefore, it is clear that parts weight reduction and material selection, as well as the development of fuel efficiency improvement and next-generation vehicle technologies are important measures that will lead to emissions reduction.

Details of the 15 Categories Specified in Scope 3 and Respective Share of Total Emissions

Category	Emission rate
1. Purchased goods and services	16.0%
2. Capital goods	0.9%
3. Fuel- and energy-related activities (not included in Scope 1 or Scope 2)	0.2%
4. Upstream transportation and distribution	Less than 0.1%
5. Waste generated in operations	Less than 0.1%
6. Business travel	Less than 0.1%
7. Employee commuting	0.2%
8. Upstream leased assets	-
9. Downstream transportation and distribution	Less than 0.1%
10. Processing of sold products	0.3%
11. Use of sold products	81.2%
12. End-of-life treatment of sold products	0.9%
13. Downstream leased assets	-
14. Franchises	-
15. Investments	0.1%

Note 1: Category 14 is not applicable. Category 8 is included in Scope 1 and 2, and Category 13 is included in Category 11.

Note 2: Emission rates are determined based on the FY2014 calculated values

Pursuing Increased Transport Efficiency and Reducing CO₂ Emissions in Logistics Activities

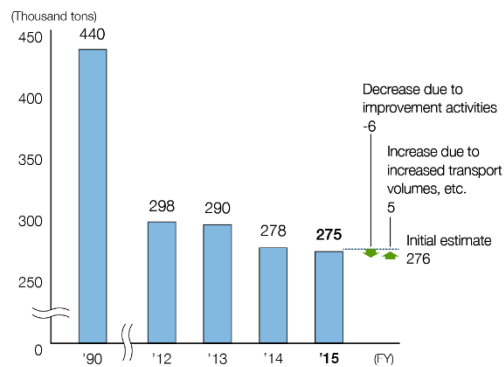
Continue to Conduct Activities to Reduce CO₂ Emissions

In FY2015, Toyota Motor Corporation (TMC) implemented various initiatives, including activities to increase the loading efficiency of trucks, modal shifts, and ongoing fuel-efficiency improvement activities with logistics partners. Through these activities, CO₂ emissions were reduced by 6,000 tons, but changes including an

increase in long-haul transportation resulted in total CO₂ emissions of 275,000 tons.

CO₂ emissions per ton-kilometer (the transport of one ton of goods over a distance of one kilometer) were 108.4 g-CO₂/tkm.

Trends in CO₂ Emissions from TMC Logistics Operations (Japan)



Note: The CO₂ conversion coefficient was calculated based on guidelines such as the "Guidelines on Disclosure of CO₂ Emissions from Transportation & Distribution (version 3.0)" issued by the Japanese Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry and the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism.

For more information on the conversion coefficient, please visit the webpage below:
<http://www.toyota-global.com/sustainability/environment/data/conversionfactor.pdf>

Scope of CO₂ Emissions Calculations from TMC Logistics Operations

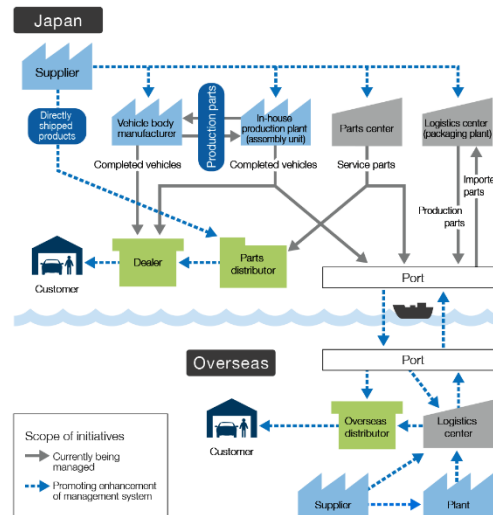


Figure 1: A screenshot of the Toyota report with red frames denoting the sections of texts copied into the corpus

3.2. Methodology

This research investigates corporate environmental discourse, specifically looking at how corporations portray themselves in relation to the environmental problems. A CL approach was identified as providing the most appropriate methodological framework. It can analyse large number of data without having presuppositions as to where exactly the analysis will go and to what results. Although a basic set of steps will be followed, the analysis will be at the same time driven by the data and findings encountered throughout the process.

Besides this, there is another advantage to combining CL and ECDA. As Baker (2012) points out, traditional CDS have come under criticism for being biased, with some accusing CD scholars of “cherry-picking” the data which would suit their particular agenda. Integrating CL methods (especially the quantitative forms of analysis to reveal the salient patterns) into a CDS research can thus help to balance the biased view and lead to a higher degree of objectivity.

The fusion of CDS and CL is labelled by some as corpus-assisted discourse studies (CADS).⁶ Despite being focused on discourse, CADS “is not tied to any particular school of discourse analysis, certainly not, for instance, to *critical* discourse analysis” (Partington et al., 2013: 10). This does not, however, mean that these two approaches cannot be combined. In the end, “the aim of the CADS approach is the uncovering [...] of what we might call non-obvious meaning, that is, meaning which might not be readily available to the naked eye” (Partington et al., 2013: 11). Such an aim seems to be in line with that of CDS, which also seeks to critically read the text and uncover the embedded ideologies. The important distinction to be made here is that unlike CADS, CDS are primarily politically motivated (Partington, et al. 2013).

It needs to be emphasized that in this research I view CADS as a methodological approach which offers specific tools and a series of steps to carry out the analysis. CDS, or specifically ECDA, on the other hand, constitute the theoretical departure. Although this research does not aim to be *critical* in the sense that it would aim to uncover the dominant political ideology, it is motivated by pressing socioecological issues (which, as was pointed out, could be seen as stemming from the current socioeconomical system) and it aims to investigate the dominant discourse patterns to uncover what kind of implicit messages it might be sending. I believe that in order to achieve this, a degree of critical approach is necessary.

⁶ On the other hand, some researchers avoid using this term, claiming that the word “assisted” suggests that CL is somehow subservient to CDS here (Baker, et al., 2008).

Deriving from the methods provided by CL my analyses will focus on three main areas: **frequency**, **keyness** and **collocations** (which also include the investigation of the concordance lines). These steps are also suggested by Baker (2006) as a suitable approach for the analysis of discourse through corpora, although he does not work explicitly under the heading of CADS (he labels his approach as “corpus-based discourse analysis”).

The first step will look into **frequency**, meaning the most frequent words in the corpus. “Frequency is one of the most central concepts underpinning the analysis of corpora [and serves as] a good starting point for the analysis of any type of corpus” (Baker, 2006: 47).

The main merit of frequency lists is that they expose the most important concepts in the texts and hence indicate what the researcher should focus upon. It is also interesting to compare frequency lists of different corpora to highlight their specifics (Hunston, 2002). The frequency list of the Toyota corpus will be compared to a general reference corpus which serves as a benchmark of what is common or standard in the language - the list of the most frequent words of the written part of BNC will be used here.⁷ This can bring to attention words which occur in the reports more frequently than what is common in the general use of the language.

Frequency lists generate only single words, but it might also be worth looking at the most frequent clusters of words (also known as n-grams). This might be seen as bordering on the investigation of collocations (see below), but clusters represent tighter relationships between words than collocations (Baker, 2006).

Finally, it is important to emphasize here that when the lists of most frequent single words and clusters are generated, only those words and clusters which will be identified as possibly providing answer to the research aim (how corporations present themselves and the environmental problems) will be selected for further analysis.

The frequency analysis will be followed by the examination of the **keywords** of the corpus. When looking at the so-called keyness, it is necessary to work with more than one corpus,

⁷ I am aware of the limits to using BNC as a general reference corpus. The main objection could be that the corpus is relatively dated, but the main advantage of BNC lies in its make-up, with the corpus containing texts from a variety of different sources. Corpora of English which are more recent and also free to use often contain only texts collected online. I see the range of texts as a more important factor, assuming that the ‘datedness’ of BNC will not impact the most frequent words found in the corpus in comparison to more recent corpora.

as keywords are generated through a cross-comparison. As opposed to frequency lists, which simply list the words according to their frequency of occurrence, keyword lists show salient words, i.e. words which are statistically more likely to occur in one corpus compared to another (Baker, 2006). The most frequent words can be the same across corpora (especially grammatical words), but the salient words bring to light concepts which are significant or unique to the specific corpus. Examination of keyness can thus bring to attention words which might not appear in the frequency list but are nevertheless important for the corpus. The resulting keyword list is obviously dependent on the corpus used for the comparison. The Toyota corpus will be compared to two different corpora here: the written part of BNC, as this comparison will generate the words salient not only for the Toyota corpus, but possibly also for environmental reporting in general. The second corpus used for the comparison will be the corpus of environmental reports published by the luxury fashion company LVMH (Moët Hennessy Louis Vuitton).⁸ The keywords generated through this comparison will indicate which words are specific to the Toyota environmental reports as opposed to environmental reports published by a corporation from a different industry.

The final step, and most comprehensive, step in the analysis is the investigation of the **collocates** of words and word clusters identified as important in the steps above, which will be done by looking in more detail at the individual **concordance lines** in which the words occur.

Collocation, in the famous words of Firth, can be defined as “the company the word keeps” (Firth, 1957 in Baker, 2016: 140). The interest in collocation reflects the idea that the meaning of a word is not contained in the word itself but rather arises from other words with which it co-occurs (McEnery & Hardie, 2012). The examination of collocations thus looks at which two words tend to co-occur next to or close to each other with a statistical significance (Baker, 2006).

⁸ When collecting and preparing the data for the research, environmental reports from two different companies were originally downloaded and converted into data sources – these were reports published by Toyota and by LVMH. Although only Toyota reports were eventually analysed in this research (due to the limited space available), the LVMH reports were also utilized, serving as a comparison corpus on the basis of which keywords were generated. The corpus of LVMH reports also contains the last three reports published by the company. With 68,641 word tokens, it is larger than the Toyota corpus.

Collocations, or, to be more precise, their strength, can be calculated in different ways. Simply looking at which collocates are most frequent can be misleading, as such collocates are often grammatical words which are very frequent in English in general. Different statistical methods can be used to generate the collocates. In this research I will be using log-likelihood as it takes into account the frequency but does not tend to favour low-frequency words.

However, the investigation of collocations will not be concerned primarily with finding the strongest collocation. Other important concepts which need to be mentioned are those of discourse prosody and semantic preference. We talk about positive or negative discourse prosody of a word (in Stubbs' terms, otherwise also known as "semantic prosody") when it "appears in the vicinity of words (or phrases) which indicate positive or negative effect" (Baker, 2016: 140). The investigation of positive/negative discourse prosody is similar to the traditional concept of connotation, which also looks at positive or negative evaluations of a word. Yet while connotation is usually judged by mere intuition, the discourse prosody of a word can be discovered only by analysing the concordance lines, as some argue (McEnery & Hardie, 2012).

The concept of semantic preference is often discussed together with that of discourse prosody, as both are concerned with drawing a pattern across different collocations. However, while discourse prosody focuses on distinguishing the positive or negative evaluations, examining the semantic preference takes into account whether a word has a tendency to collocate with words which display some kind of semantic similarity or belong to the same semantic field (McEnery & Hardie, 2012). A discreet distinction is difficult to make as discourse prosody and semantic preference can naturally overlap and complement each other. What is more important, however, is that both concepts can reveal larger tendencies in the corpus which might not be obvious from looking at individual words. Rather than examining the language in terms of grammar, they indicate what attitudes the language express, how it reflects and also shapes how we think and feel about the issue discussed. For this reason, they are an important component of CADS.

All the above mentioned steps will be carried out in the AntConc 3.5.8. programme, a free-to-use corpus analysis toolkit developed by Laurence Anthony.

Although the analysis will be based primarily on the adoption of CL methods, the interpretation of the findings will also take into account the methods of linguistic analysis

provided by CDS, as I believe that these can complement each other. Fairclough (1996) suggests a series of questions to indicate the direction of critical analysis of the language – these do not constitute a rigid framework structure, but rather represent a selection of the textual features which tend to be significant for critical analysis and thus should be paid attention to (ibid.: 110).

Considering the aim of this research, Fairclough's suggestions regarding the level of lexis and grammar of the text seem to be most relevant. As far as the vocabulary is concerned, Fairclough suggests that the words are scrutinized with regard to their relationship to the ideology: How do the words contribute to the particular ideology? Are some aspects of the text overworded through a frequent use of synonyms? (This can lead to foregrounding a particular aspect of reality at the expense of another aspect.) What expressive values do the words have? Do they express positive or negative evaluation?

In terms of grammar, Fairclough's questions related to the representation of participants and processes are applicable here as they are closely linked to the research question: How are participants (i.e. Toyota here) portrayed and in what kind of processes? Is the agency of the participants obfuscated (e.g. through nominalisation or passive constructions, in which the agent is not grammatically required)? Is modality used to express different degrees of certainty/evaluation of truth? Are personal pronouns *we* or *you* used to set up particular relationships with the readers? (ibid.: 110)

Although the questions might seem fragmentary (note that only some of the questions proposed by Fairclough were selected here) and not all of them can be neatly applied to all the findings encountered in the analysis, they point out to wider issues in the light of which the texts should be investigated. Some features can overlap (e.g. the concept of evaluation is important for both CL and CDS), but overall the aspects of texts seen as relevant in CDS can enhance the interpretation of the prevalent lexico-grammatical patterns revealed through CL and thus possibly uncover the more implicit messages embedded in the discourse.

3.3. Working hypothesis

As stated above, CADS was identified as a suitable methodological framework as it might compensate for the possible bias of traditional CDS, but also because it provides the researcher with an opportunity to examine the data without preconceptions as to the specific process of the analysis. The area of corporate environmental reporting seems to be relatively

under-researched by scholars and although some research has been carried out (see 2.1.1.) the issue can be scrutinized from different angles. As far as linguistics is concerned, little research seems to have been done, which also entails that before carrying out the analyses, it is difficult to predict what the results will be.

At the same time, it would be naïve to argue that the research can be approached with an unbiased mind without any assumptions whatsoever. Following some of the studies mentioned above, I expect that the environmental reports will be “corporate-centric”. To be more specific, I believe that for the corporation the environmental problems will serve primarily as a background against which it can improve its public image. For this reason, it can be expected that Toyota will portray itself as an active actor which has been taking various measures to improve its environmental performance.

Although environmental problems will be referred to in the texts, their severity might not be fully acknowledged. In the end, if the reports highlighted the aspects of the environmental destruction, the overall impression would be rather grim. I suggest that this would run against the company’s efforts to provide a generally positive and confident impression which will appease the minds of the concerned readers.

These expectations might not, of course, correspond to the actual findings. For this reason, we should also be aware that CADS, despite the above mentioned praise of its objectivity, is still an approach based on the researcher’s interpretation of the material – it is the role of the researcher to deduce the patterns and interpret the results in a meaningful way. It can thus be very tempting to look for evidence which will confirm what we expect or hope to find. Naturally, the aim here is to be objective and draw conclusions on the basis of the actual findings. At the same time, it is necessary to bear in mind that the underlying approach assumed in this research is critical, i.e. it does not take the text at face value: it is fuelled by environmental concerns and as such believes that environmental protection should be prioritized over economic growth. This is obviously not in line with the principles underlying the working of most corporations which are still primarily profit-oriented (Breeze, 2013). Corporations are thus seen as a part of the problem and for this reason were identified as a suitable material for a critical analysis. I assume that their environmental discourse will be adjusted to fit their goals and will not to the full degree reflect their role in the process.

4. Analysis

The aim of the analysis is to reveal more about the discursive strategies used by Toyota when discussing the ecological problems and the company's position in relation to these issues. The analysis is divided into three parts, beginning with the investigation of frequency, i.e. the most frequent words in the corpus.

4.1. Frequency

In the first step, the list of most frequent words ⁹ and clusters of the Toyota corpus was generated. As suggested above, the frequency is a good starting point of the analysis as it reveals the most important concepts discussed and indicates the direction for further steps of the analysis.

As can be seen from the list of the forty most frequent words (Table 2), majority are grammatical words (*the, and, of, to*, etc.). Although lexical words usually receive more attention as the primary carriers of meaning, the list of the most frequent words in the Toyota corpus includes a pair of grammatical words which also deserve further attention: *we* and *our*.

These two pronouns were identified as salient for the following reasons. First, as noted above, personal pronouns *we* and *you* express a relational value, positioning the addressor and the addressee into specific roles (Fairclough, 1996). Second, if we compare the frequencies of *we* and *our* in the Toyota corpus with those from a general reference corpus of English (the written part of BNC), we can see that a difference arises (Table 3): *we* is roughly three times and *our* four times more frequent in comparison to BNC. These numbers clearly indicate that the words are significant for the Toyota reports.

⁹ To be more precise, frequency lists generate the most frequent word forms (e.g. the list in Table 2 contains *is* and *are* as two different forms of the verb *be*). This shows that it might be worth examining selected words (such as common nouns or verbs) from the frequency list as lemmas in the later stages of the analysis.

Most frequent words	No. of occurrences	Frequency per ten thousand words
the	2966	561.40
and	1959	370.79
of	1867	353.38
to	1631	308.71
in	1527	289.03
Toyota	797	150.86
a	709	134.19
for	546	103.35
environmental	526	99.56
with	515	97.48
we	498	94.26
as	435	82.33
on	424	80.25
by	361	68.33
is	343	64.92
activities	335	63.41
that	306	57.92
water	293	55.46
vehicles	292	55.27
from	291	55.08
at	279	52.81
emissions	264	49.97
CO	259	49.02
are	240	45.43
will	236	44.67
environment	203	39.42
use	194	36.72
our	193	36.53
FY	192	36.34
global	186	35.21
new	184	34.83
was	184	34.83
has	175	33.12
production	175	33.12
have	173	32.75
reduce	169	31.99
challenge	164	31.04
vehicle	161	30.47
recycling	157	29.72
measures	151	28.58

Table 2: 40 most frequent words in the Toyota corpus

	BNC written part (85,887,272 word tokens)	Toyota corpus
We	27.45	94.26
Our	9.09	36.53

Table 3: Comparison of the frequencies (per ten thousand words) of *we* and *our* in the written part of BNC and in the Toyota corpus

As far as the lexical words are concerned, the most frequent words include *Toyota*, *environmental*, *activities*, *water*, *vehicles*, *emissions*, *environment*, *use*, *CO*, *FY*, *global*, *new*, *production*, *reduce*, *challenge*, *vehicles*, *recycling* and *measures*. The abbreviation *CO* is used mostly as *CO₂* (it can also be found in the corpus as an abbreviation for *company*) and *FY* refers to *fiscal year*.

The primary focus of this research is to investigate how corporations portray themselves and the ecological problems. For this reason, only the lexical words ***Toyota***, ***environmental***, ***water***, ***emissions***, ***environment***, ***CO₂*** and ***recycling*** were directly selected for further investigation. This does not mean that the other remaining lexical words do not contribute to the prevalent discursive strategies. However, the limited scope available for the research renders it impossible to examine all frequent words in detail.

If we look at the most frequent 3-word clusters (Table 4), we can see that some of the most frequent single words listed above re-occur and even collocate together. The fact that these words appear in the list of the most frequent 3-grams indicates that they form strong collocations and it can be assumed that they will be discussed later when the collocates of the individual words are scrutinized. Therefore the clusters containing the most frequent words selected in the previous step (i.e. *Toyota environmental challenge*, *reduce CO₂ emissions*, *zero CO₂ emissions*) will not be considered further.

As for the remaining 3-grams, the cluster *harmony with nature* seems to be linked to the research aim, referring to the environmental concerns. Again, although the other clusters can be also expected to contribute to salient discourse patterns, as such they do seem to refer to Toyota or the environmental problems.

Most frequent 3-grams	Number of occurrences
end of life	88
in order to	58
the Toyota environmental	58
Toyota environmental challenge	55
harmony with nature	49
the use of	47
of life vehicles	45
in harmony with	44
reduce CO ₂ emissions	42
year on year	40
as a result	39
around the world	37
based on the	37
as well as	36
percent year on	35
CO ₂ emissions in	31
the amount of	31
zero CO ₂ emissions	31
each country and	30
in FY we	29

Table 4: 20 most frequent 3-grams in the Toyota corpus

The list of words and 3-grams selected for further investigation on the basis of their frequency thus includes:

Toyota, we, our, environmental, water, emissions, environment, CO₂, recycling, harmony with nature

4.2. Keywords

In the next step the analysis looked into the area of keyness, which brings to attention words salient (not necessarily frequent) in one corpus as opposed to another corpus.

The keywords of the Toyota corpus were generated by comparing the corpus to two different corpora: the written part of BNC as a general reference corpus of English (to highlight words specific to the Toyota corpus and possibly to corporate environmental reporting in more general) and a corpus of environmental reports published by the luxury fashion company LVMH (to highlight the words specific to the Toyota environmental reports as opposed to environmental reporting from a different corporation).

Using the default AntConc setting (i.e. keyword statistics: log-likelihood (4 term) and keyword statistics threshold: $p < 0.05$), the words with the highest degree of keyness were generated as below:

	Keyness
Toyota	+ 10433.64
environmental	+ 3891.47
FY	+ 2727.31
emissions	+ 2460.83
vehicles	+ 2395.21
activities	+ 1953.39
recycling	+ 1448.59
Prius	+ 1311.86
global	+ 1290.24
percent	+ 1228.02

Table 5: 10 words with the highest keyness in comparison to the written part of BNC

	Keyness
Toyota	+ 1333.97
vehicles	+ 394.44
FY	+ 320.1
we	+ 292.02
activities	+ 275.38
vehicle	+ 229.19
Percent	+ 183.28
Through	+ 167.77
CO	+ 165.29
hybrid	+ 164.78

Table 6: 10 words with the highest keyness in comparison to the LVMH corpus

As we can see, many of the most frequent words reoccur (*Toyota*, *environmental*, *emissions*, *we*, *CO₂*). From those which were not listed above, the words *Prius* (generated by a comparison with BNC) and *hybrid* (generated by a comparison to the LVMH corpus) were selected for further scrutiny. At first sight these words do not seem to be related to the company or the ecological problems. *Prius* and *hybrid*, however, refer to the range of hybrid vehicles produced by Toyota, the aim of which is to reduce the impact of cars on the environment. They are thus indicative of some of the strategies used by the corporation to

address its environmental impact. For this reason, they were identified as being potentially useful for further analysis.

To sum up, the full list of words and 3-grams identified as important for the Toyota corpus (by examining the areas of frequency and keyness) are:

Toyota, we, our, environment/al, water, emissions, CO₂, recycling, hybrid, Prius, harmony with nature.

4.3. Collocates and concordance lines

The previous steps of the analysis were more quantitative-oriented, selecting the most significant concepts on the basis of their frequency and saliency. The analysis of collocates and concordance lines of the individual words and word clusters relies on a more qualitative approach. The insight into the way the words tend to co-occur, together with the examination of their surrounding linguistic environment, points out to the larger patterns which help to uncover the prevalent discourse strategies used in the reports.

To investigate the collocations in more detail, a list of the strongest collocates was generated for each word. After this, selected collocates were examined by scanning the concordance lines and the surrounding textual environment (in case of the cluster *harmony with nature*, the collocates list was not generated and the cluster was scrutinized directly in the context of its concordance lines). The statistical method used to generate the collocates was log-likelihood, and the word span was set to 4 words on the right-hand side and 4 words on the left-hand side.

The words referring to the corporation (*Toyota*, *we*, *our*) were examined first, followed by the words referring to the environmental concerns (*environment*, *environmental*, *water*, *emissions*, *CO*, *recycling*, *Prius*, *hybrid*, *harmony with nature*). It is inevitable that the discussions of these words will overlap, as the words can collocate together. However, for the sake of clarity, it is convenient to follow this basic grouping.

4.3.1. *Toyota*

As can be seen from the list of the strongest collocates of the word *Toyota* (Table 7), log-likelihood tends to mix both function words and content words. The salient lexical collocates selected for further analysis are *environmental* and *green*, as they are clearly related to the environmental discourse. As for the grammatical words, *has* and *is* will be also investigated further - a brief look at the concordance lines shows that they function predominantly as auxiliary verbs in specific tense constructions, which suggest that verbal constructions should be looked into.

the	corporation
environmental	motor
in	green
has	of
challenge	activities
is	FY
project	Toyota
global	wave
and	group
to	at

Table 7: Top 20 collocates of *Toyota*¹⁰

Toyota + environmental

The strongest lexical collocate of *Toyota* is *environmental*, primarily due to the frequent collocations *Toyota Environmental Challenge 2050* (44 occurrences) and *Toyota Environmental Action Plan* (16 occurrences). Other less frequent collocations include *Toyota Environmental Activities Grant Program* (7 occurrences) and *Toyota Environmental management* (5 occurrences).

Toyota Environmental Challenge 2050 is the name of the plan set up by Toyota to tackle environmental issues. The plan consists of “highly motivated environmental goals” the company wants to achieve by 2050. *Toyota Environmental Action Plan* refers to a series of steps necessary to achieve the goals set under the 2050 Challenge. Looking at the concordance lines of these two phrases, a clear tendency emerges, which is to present the Challenge and the Plan in the best light possible. This is achieved through different strategies.

The set-up of the plan is highlighted as a major achievement, with some statements verging on hyperbolic and unrealistic:

1. *Toyota established the **Toyota Environmental Challenge 2050** and has been taking action not just to contribute to keeping global warming below 2° through zero CO₂ emissions, but also **to have a positive impact on the Earth.***
2. *In October 2015, we formulated and announced the **Toyota Environmental Challenge 2050**. Our ideal goal has grown higher from “Toyota’s presence will not*

¹⁰ For *Toyota* (and also the word *environmental*) a longer list of collocates is provided than for other words because of the higher frequency of the words and wider range of collocates.

impact environment” to “Toyota’s presence will have a positive impact on the environment.”¹¹

The reports mostly talk about Toyota announcing or formulating its plans, stressing that it is deeply in line with the Toyota’s philosophy and claiming that Toyota is the world’s leading environmental company:

3. *Based on its philosophy and policies, Toyota formulated the Toyota Environmental Challenge 2050*
4. *meeting the challenges outlined in the new Toyota Environmental Challenge 2050 is becoming extremely important in order for Toyota to continue being a leading environmental company in the world.*

The CSR agenda underlying the report is obviously also present, as Toyota assumes the role of an entity which contributes to the wellbeing of the whole society. The concept of sustainability is closely linked to the discussion of the social impact, although the report does not make it clear what exactly sustainability means to Toyota:

5. *In FY2016, Toyota will begin the Sixth Toyota Environmental Action Plan and take steps to grow sustainably together with society toward the year 2050.*
6. *These activities are being further proceeded along with the Toyota Environmental Action Plan that sets the specific action plans and targets for every five-year period in order to contribute to the realization of a sustainable society.*

The reports also attempt to balance the self-praise by emphasising the acclaim Toyota has received externally, possibly to provide a sense of objectivity (note, however, that the source of the acclaim is not always clearly identified):

7. *Toyota has earned high praise from consumers for announcing the Toyota Environmental Challenge 2050 and clearly articulating a future vision.*
8. *Toyota has been widely acclaimed for setting highly-motivated environmental goals known as the Toyota Environmental Challenge 2050,*

¹¹ As was found out during the analysis, the corpus often contains constructions or sentences which are identical or extremely similar to one another. A closer investigation revealed that the corporations tend to ‘recycle’ the reports and sometimes use the same pieces of texts across the reports.

9. *At our environmental lectures, astronaut Ms. Naoko Yamazaki discussed global warming and the recent issue of space debris, while also **praising Toyota** for announcing the **Toyota Environmental Challenge 2050** as our plan to **voluntarily** tackle various environmental issues.*

These excerpts clearly display the tendency to praise Toyota for its efforts and its contributions to the environmental protection. Taking into account that Toyota is the author, the reports become a form of explicit self-promotion which, however, is legitimated here as environmental concerns. The notion that these actions are voluntary (excerpt 9: *our plan to voluntarily tackle various environmental issues*) is also worth considering; Toyota is obviously not legally obliged to take these steps, yet the word *voluntarily* also implies that the company is doing us and the environment a favour and thus eschews the fact that for an automotive company it should be a matter of necessity, rather than of will, to change the way its operates.

Toyota + green

Another collocate of *Toyota* linked to the environmental domain is the word *green*. Similarly to *environmental*, which as a collocate occurs in phrases denoting Toyota's projects and activities, the collocation with *green* is also used to refer to corporate agenda. It occurs exclusively in two collocations - *Toyota Green Wave Project* (17 occurrences) and *Toyota Green Purchasing Guidelines* (11 occurrences).

The goal of the Green Wave Project is to "promote expansion of nature conservation activities connecting communities." As another component of the corporate environmental and PR agenda, the project is again highly praised in the reports:

10. *In the **Toyota Green Wave Project**, afforestation at plants as a part of sustainable plant activities was expanded to the Plant in Harmony with Nature Project*
11. ***Toyota Green Wave Project** Working Groups were established by 23 affiliated companies in May 2015 to expand activities in harmony with nature, enhance the dissemination of information, and strengthen cooperation by participating companies.*

The same goes for *Toyota Green Purchasing Guidelines*, which are referred to as being revised and enhanced to a more environment-friendly level:

12. *Toyota revised its **Toyota Green Purchasing Guidelines** and is promoting chemical substance control in its supply chain.*
13. *Toyota compiled the **Toyota Green Purchasing Guidelines** with an aim to address environmental issues that suppliers consider based on the Toyota Environmental Challenge 2050, and rolled this out to the suppliers. [sic]*

More importantly, what we can see here is a manifestation of the so-called “green language” (Fill, 2001) in words such as *green*, *nature* or *sustainable/sustainability*. These words place the texts in a particular ideological framework (Fairclough, 1996: 113), specifically a kind of green ideology. However, rather than being a manifestation of covert ideological underpinning, these words are used by corporations ostentatiously. Ecolinguists often trace the use of the green language in environmental discourses as this kind of language aims to achieve “a superficial ecologisation of the discourse” (Fill, 2001: 70). Words such as *green* or *sustainable* function as the buzzwords of the current environmental debate, occurring frequently in discourses of commercial or promotional nature (such as adverts) to evoke the idea that the products or the companies selling them have a positive environmental impact (ibid.). Toyota seems to be appropriating the green language to a large degree, implementing these buzzwords into the names of its complex corporate web of projects, action plans, guidelines etc.

The tendency to communicate the environmental concerns through corporate activities labelled with positively sounding names is also apparent when we look at the word *project* (one of the most frequent collocates of the word *Toyota*, as can be seen in Table 7). Other projects mentioned in the reports include *Toyota ESD (Education for Sustainable Development) Project*, *Toyota 100 Global Dismantlers Project* and *Toyota Today for Tomorrow Project*. Not only by introducing these projects, but also by giving them the specific names, Toyota purposefully adopts the green ideology in order to portray itself as an eco-friendly company.

Toyota + has/is

As was noted above, the grammatical collocates *has* and *is* are also examined because of their tendency to function in specific verbal constructions in the corpus.

Except for one occurrence, all the 80 instances of *Toyota + has* use the verb as an auxiliary verb forming the present perfect tense, both in its simple and continuous form:

14. *Toyota **has also developed** the world's first technologies for using these batteries*
15. *Toyota **has been** globally **promoting** CO₂ emissions reduction at plants*
16. *Toyota **has implemented** various initiatives such as collecting rainwater to reduce industrial water usage.*

In general, the present perfective is usually seen as signifying “past time with current relevance” (Quirk et al., 1985: 190), relating the action expressed by the verb more directly to the present, as opposed to the simple past. For this reason, the present perfective is often used to underscore nearness of the action, referring to an event in the recent past, which suggests here that the actions carried out by Toyota have a positive impact on the present. The tense can also signify that the result of the action is visible in the present (Leech, 2004), as can be clearly seen in the example *Toyota has developed new technologies and these are still used*. The progressive aspect, on the other hand, expresses that Toyota started carrying out the actions in the past and still does so. This assumes that Toyota is not only active now, but that it has been an environment-friendly company for some time.

The emphasis on now, on the present moment, is even more evident in the use of *is* as an auxiliary forming the present continuous verb form (35 occurrences):

17. *Toyota **is actively building** partnerships with local communities and industry to promote future hydrogen usage*
18. *Toyota **is promoting** the widespread use of fuel cell electric vehicles (FCEVs) and **actively collaborating** with national and local governments, local communities, and industries.*
19. *Toyota **is working** to reduce CO₂ through comprehensive energy-saving measures*

The progressive aspect expresses that the action is in progress and, similarly to the present perfective, it emphasises the ‘nowness’ of Toyota’s action. Toyota is positioned as an agent which is doing something right now, addressing the issues which are relevant in the present moment. Note also the explicit use of the adverb *actively* in excerpts 17 and 18.

Leech (2004) also sees one of the functions of the progressive aspect as giving us “an inside view of the happening” (ibid.: 18). This is closely connected to the “subjective” function of the progressive (Levin, 2013), which, in addition to reflecting the speaker’s interpretation, can add emotional colouring to the process described. In this case, it helps to intensify and further strengthen the proposition that Toyota takes care of the environment.

Whether the use of the present perfective and the present continuous is significant in the reports can be measured against the use simple past and the simple present; these tenses, being morphologically unmarked or marked by inflection, are more difficult to generate and were searched for by scanning the individual concordance lines.

The present and past simple seem to be also relatively common, i.e. there do not seem to be a significant difference as far as the frequency is concerned. The use of the past simple seems to be primarily grammatically conditioned, as it is used in sentences with a reference to a specific point in the past (e.g. *In 1997, Toyota completed the implementation of measures to prevent outflow of groundwater*). However, the reasons behind the choice between the present simple and progressive are less easy to discern. In the corpus, the present simple occurs with verb which are less likely to take on the progressive form in general (e.g. *to consider, estimate, position*), but the use of the present progressive is more difficult to pin down, if we consider the following examples:

20. *Under this structure of environmental management system, Toyota **is identifying** environmental risks and opportunities*
21. *Globally, Toyota **is steadily implementing** measures to reduce water consumption*
22. *On the global level, Toyota **is engaging** in steady water conservation activities*

The verbs *promote* and *continue* occur in both forms, without a clear distinction as to why the specific form was used:

23. *Toyota **promotes** ecosystem conservation in communities around its business sites*
24. *Toyota **is promoting** the introduction of renewable energy, taking into consideration the characteristics of each country and region.*

I suggest that the use of the present continuous form is somewhat marked here in that grammatically, it could be replaced by the more ‘unmarked’ present simple (unless the present continuous serves to indicate that the action is only temporary, which does not seem to be the case here). We can thus assume that the choice of the present continuous is

deliberate, as it intensifies the idea that Toyota is actively doing something right now. This image might be less distinct if the simple present was used.

Another significant feature worth noting in the verbal constructions is the high degree of agency ascribed to Toyota. From nearly 800 occurrences of the word Toyota in the corpus, in more than 260 cases *Toyota* functions as a grammatical subject, assuming the semantic role of an actor who actively does something or makes the processes happen (the exceptions are sentences with stative verbs such as *Toyota recognizes the various risks arising from global environmental problems* or *Toyota considers FCVs and EVs to be the future eco-friendly vehicles*, which, nevertheless, also aim for a positive representation of the company).

To highlight Toyota's role of an active doer, specific verbs re-occur in the constructions. A closer investigation of the concordance lines in which *Toyota* appears as the subject reveals that the verbs can be grouped into larger (not necessarily discreet) categories. These are not specific to the individual tenses, but rather can be traced across all the tense constructions used. The verbs were categorized as following:

- verbs denoting objectives: *to aim, to endeavour, to pursue, to strive, to target*
- verbs denoting continuing activity: *to continue, to proceed, to progress*
- verbs denoting collaboration and sharing of information: *to collaborate, to contribute, to co-operate, to participate, to disclose, to share*
- verbs denoting a process of creating: *to build, to construct, to create, to develop*
- verbs denoting a process of introducing something new: *to bring in, to establish, to implement, to initiate, to introduce, to launch*
- verbs denoting improvement or expansion of the current activities: *to enhance, to broaden, to expand*
- verb denoting initiative: *to lead, to promote*
- verbs denoting unspecified general activity: *to carry out, to conduct, to make, to work*
- verbs denoting evaluation of the current situation: *to review, to collect (information), to identify (risks and opportunities)*

The high degree of synonymy, which is apparent from the list of verbs used, points out to what Fairclough (1996) labels as “overwording” – certain aspects of reality (Toyota as actively taking action) are foregrounded here through the accumulation of constructions with semantically similar verbs. As a result, a specific image is reinforced throughout the

reports – Toyota appears as a company which considers the current situation of the environment, actively addresses the environmental problems, improves its current processes, introduces new solutions, spreads its activities further, collaborates with others and sets highly ambitious goals.

On their own, not all the verbs carry necessarily positive connotations, yet when used in the context of the report (with Toyota functioning as the subject), they acquire a positive evaluation which aims to present the company in a better light. Breeze (2013) also notes the high frequency of these words in corporate discourse, labelling them as “power words”, the aim of which is to imply “a positive judgement and positive appreciation” (ibid.: 160). Although the positive evaluation is not always explicit, the general picture constructed is clear. The examination of the semantic classes of the verbs thus confirms that the environmental reports are one of the devices of the company’s PR agenda, constructing a green image for the company.

4.3.2. *We and our*

We

We and *our* were identified as salient grammatical words because of their high frequency in comparison to a general reference corpus (Table 3). In general, the use of *we* in corporate discourse is a common phenomenon (Breeze, 2013) and the question of its reference should be considered. In the reports, *we* is mainly “exclusive” in that it refers only to the author/s of the text and does not include the readers (Fairclough, 1996: 69). In this sense *we* equals to Toyota, yet the precise scope of reference is hard to establish and in most cases cannot be identified clearly. The current corporate culture often aims at building an image of collective identity (Breeze, 2013) which subsumes both the lowest paid factory workers and the top management. However, in some cases, *we* seems to refer to the higher management only, as the reports talk about the employees of Toyota separately:

25. ***Our employees** have become more aware of environment than before.*

26. *Therefore, **we** involve our **employees** physically in afforestation drives and environment month activities.*

A more generic, inclusive *we* (which subsumes the readers, or the general public) is also used, although less frequently (7 occurrences). Interestingly, unlike the exclusive *we* which

is used in constructions with a positive discourse prosody (as will be discussed below), the inclusive *we* appears in sentences in which the ecological problems are discussed:

27. *I believe that the problem of global warming, or CO₂ emissions, is the issue that goes to the very roots of how **we will live***
28. *If humans and nature are to coexist into the future, **we need to conserve** forests and other rich natural systems in all regions.*
29. ***We will not be able to leave** a beautiful Earth to future generations unless **we take** the environment into consideration in our car manufacturing*
30. *It is further estimated that, to hold the temperature rise since before the Industrial Revolution to below 2°C **we will not only have to reduce** CO₂ emissions to zero, but will need to achieve an actual trend through absorption.*
31. *in order to keep the temperature increase to less than 2°C, reducing CO₂ emissions to zero will not be enough. **We must reduce** emissions to less than zero*

The reports seem to resort to the generic inclusive *we* to emphasize that ecological problems matter to all of us. Note also the degree of deontic modality employed in the sentences (*we must reduce, we need to conserve, we will not only have to reduce*) which underscores the necessity of taking some action. The inclusive *we* also establishes a feeling of solidarity between the public and the company, which could provide a basis for the support of the company's green politics.

Since *we* functions primarily as a substitute for *Toyota* in most cases, the dominant discourse patterns are very similar to those described above, as some of the strongest collocates of *we* (Table 8) suggest.

the
will
have
to
in
are
our
continue
of
and

Table 8: Top 10 collocates of *we*

We + have/are/will

The presence of *have* and *are* as auxiliaries again points out to the grammatical tenses used. However, unlike in *Toyota*, the future perspective seems to be dominant here, as there are more than 80 occurrences of future reference expressed through the auxiliary *will* (there is only one instance of future reference expressed with *be going to*):

- 32. **We will strive** to reduce the environmental impact of automobiles as close to zero as possible, and **will roll out** new initiatives towards a sustainable society looking to a positive impact on the earth and society.
- 33. **We will continue** to create new habitats to ensure that people and nature live in harmony at all of our plants.
- 34. **We will continue** to study new technologies for collecting and recycling plastics

The most frequent verbal construction here is *we will continue* which occurs 24 times in the corpus. The verb *continue* obviously implies that Toyota has been carrying out its ecological activities for some time and will be doing so in the future.

The fact that future time references are almost exclusively expressed through *will* is also worth considering. *Will* is the most neutral way of referring to the future, yet its modal nature makes it function more as a prediction, rather than as a future tense per se (Leech, 2004). Although the company presents its plans for future action almost as facts, the use of *will* weakens the assertion as to the certainty of the action happening, especially if we take into account other expressions of future time (such as *be going to* or futurate present progressive) in which the future reference is based on the present intentions (or circumstances) and the degree of certainty ascribed to the process is higher (*ibid.*).

As for the other verbal tenses, the present perfective, both in the simple and the continuous form (71 occurrences), and the present continuous (44 occurrences) are also present:

- 35. In the area of production, **we have taken** thorough energy saving measures by deploying innovative technologies when opening new plants and production lines
- 36. **We have been enhancing** the program's activities through briefings and other types of communication with suppliers.
- 37. **We are working** to reduce global average CO₂ emissions from new vehicles through improved environmental performance of vehicles and expanded vehicle line-ups.
- 38. At Toyota, **we are minimizing** our impact on water environments by taking thorough measures to reduce water on the input end

As far as other tenses are concerned, similarly to *Toyota*, the simple past is used with a specific time reference (*In this year's environmental report, we set the 2030 Milestone*) and the present simple is often (although not exclusively) used with verbs which in general do not take on the progressive aspect (*to believe, to consider, to expect, to hope, to request* or the modal verb *can*). Although significant differences do not arise in terms of frequency, we could say again that the present perfective and present continuous help to build a stronger image of the company as carrying out activities which are relevant for the current moment. Analogically to *Toyota*, *we* as a subject also assumes the role of an active doer, which is further reinforced by the selection of semantically similar verbs, the majority of which could be grouped into categories identical to those listed above:

- verbs denoting objectives: *to aim, to achieve, to embark, to intend, to plan, to pursue, to strive, to seek, to set (a milestone)*
- verbs denoting continuing activity: *to continue, to proceed*
- verbs denoting collaboration and sharing of information: *to collaborate, to contribute, to involve, to team up, to share*
- verbs denoting a process of creating: *to build, to create, to develop*
- verbs denoting a process of introducing something new: *to adopt, to announce (our Challenge), to establish, to implement, to initiate, to introduce, to launch, to roll out*
- verbs denoting improvement or expansion of the current activities: *to enhance, to broaden, to expand, to promote*
- verbs denoting initiative: *to encourage, to promote*
- verbs denoting reduction: *to cut (emissions), to minimize, to reduce (the impact)*
- verbs denoting unspecified general activity: *to carry out, to conduct, to work*
- verbs denoting evaluation of the current situation: *to analyse, to assess, to collect (information), to evaluate, to examine, to identify (risks and opportunities), to investigate, to research, to review*

It is thus clear that when functioning as a substitute for *Toyota*, *we* displays patterns identical to those identified above. The main strategy is to position Toyota as an engaged company by emphasising the range of actions it takes to address the environmental problems. This presentation is strengthened through the accumulation of semantically similar and positively charged words which further foreground a favourable corporate image.

Our

As the possessive form of the pronoun *we*, *our* also tends to occur primarily in constructions carrying positive discourse prosody.

to
we
environmental
of
stakeholders
and
in
the
initiatives
plants

Table 9: Top 10 collocates of *our*

Our + environmental

Our collocates with *environmental* mainly in constructions *our environmental initiatives* (6 occurrences), *our Environmental Report* (4 occurrences) and *our environmental measures* (2 occurrences):

39. *Since 1998, we have published an annual Environmental Report to explain **our environmental initiatives**.*
40. *In February 2017, **our Environmental Report** 2016 won the Excellence Prize in the Global Warming Countermeasure Reporting Category.*
41. *We confirm environmental consciousness through *genchi genbutsu* (on site, hands on) and rectify issues to **ensure our environmental measures** are performed.*

Other, similarly positively charged, collocates include *our achievements*, *our action plans*, *our commitment*, *our efforts*, *our goal* and *our plants* (*we will continue to create new habitats to ensure that people and nature live in harmony at all of our plants*).

Our + stakeholders

The collocation *our stakeholders* (8 occurrences) seems to be aiming at maintaining a good relationship with the stakeholders, although the report does not make it clear who these

stakeholders are. They can be only investors which, we would assume, are crucial for the company's working, or more broadly the general public:

42. *We have also published the Annual Report to share with **our stakeholders** the ways in which Toyota's business is contributing to the sustainable development of society and the Earth*
43. *We wish to continue to be a company that creates a desirable future with **our stakeholders***
44. *We kindly request the continued support and understanding of all **our stakeholders**.*

There are also instances in which *stakeholders* and *our* appear in the vicinity of the word *business*, which is also one of the stronger collocates of *our* (the word *business* is not listed in Table 9 above because it was evaluated as the 11th strongest collocate). However, if we look at the neighbouring textual environment of the concordance lines in which *our* collocates with *business*, we can see a picture different from what has been encountered in the corpus so far (the excerpts are intentionally longer here as it is the wider context from which the pattern arises):

45. *Environmental challenges may involve both **business risks and opportunities**. It is therefore essential to identify key challenges (materiality) from both **risk and opportunity perspectives** when formulating a long-term vision. In order to grasp **the potential risks and business opportunities**, Toyota has collected information, analyzing and identifying environmental challenges from the standpoints of their importance for both stakeholders and **our business**.*
46. *We have identified the key environmental challenges, measuring the impact level of stakeholder concern and **our business activities** or potential **business opportunities** by using a matrix.*
47. *Steady implementation of our challenges requires management's recognition of environmental activities as **potential business opportunities** and effective investments, in addition to involving Group companies to strengthen collaboration with **our business partners**.*

In these excerpts environmental problems are explicitly labelled as “business risk and opportunities”, which suggests that financial interests of the company shape the way Toyota addresses the ecological problems. The idea of using the environmental problems as a business opportunity has led me to investigate whether there other places in the reports in

which a similar notion is advocated. This was achieved by searching for the occurrences of the lemma *opportunity*. Although the following excerpts do not contain collocations with *our*, they contribute to establishing the specific discourse pattern and are thus listed here as well:

48. *When it comes to making management decisions Toyota recognizes the various risks arising from global environmental problems and then conduct activities against them toward the Toyota Environmental Challenge 2050, taking it as an **opportunity for Toyota to enhance its sustainable competitiveness**.*
49. *Toyota considers it is possible to create **more sales opportunities** by promptly responding to regulatory risks, as well as contributing to the world sustainable development through undertaking the zero challenges of Challenges 1 to 3, which will help mitigate the physical risks due to climate changes.*
50. *Regulatory risks such as fuel consumption regulations and energy-saving regulations may also lead to increased costs for vehicle and production activities and **lost sales opportunities** due to a delay in responding to regulations.*

From these excerpts it is clear that the financial interests permeate the ecological debate. Although not very frequent (especially if we compare them with the overwhelming self-promotion discussed above), these examples are very telling in that they show the underlying core problem of corporate environmental discourse. As was discussed above (section 2.1.1.), it is unclear what corporations actually want to achieve by focusing on the environmental problems. Despite the constant insistence on the importance of the environment (*Toyota Motor Corporation considers environmental issues to be one of its management priorities*), the analysis also reveals that the environmental focus is filtered through the business perspective, with the emphasis on the survival of the business, preventing potential business losses and ideally using the environmental problems as an opportunity to expand further and achieve higher profit.

The reports thus display traces of the Hallidayan “growthism and anthropocentrism” which place economic growth as the ultimate objective, even in the view of the environmental decline. As Fill (2001) further points out, in commercial discourses on the environment “care for the environment can be combined with profit making and highly economic aims. The ecolanguage used only thinly disguises the fact (which the firms more or less openly admit) that they (naturally) not only want to sell but want to grow and reap the rewards of being environment friendly by expanding so much more” (ibid.: 71).

Naturally, we can only guess as to the real motivation behind the corporation's decision to adopt a more eco-friendly approach. The reports primarily talk about the necessity of environmental protection and preservation, yet that does not mean that these claims should be taken at face value. Ultimately, in a discourse analysis "it is equally important to find ways to notice what is not said or cannot be said. Silence is the background against which the discourse is interpreted" (Johnstone, 2008: 74). As will be shown later as well, pointing out to what is less frequent (or completely missing) in the discourse can be as revealing as examining what is apparent.

Another feature worth noting in one the excerpts (50) is the removal of agency from the processes described:

***Regulatory risks** such as **fuel consumption regulations** and **energy-saving regulations** may also lead to **increased costs for vehicle and production activities** and lost sales opportunities due to **a delay in responding to regulations**.*

For Fairclough (1996) and other CD scholars, the representation of the social actors and their role in the processes (which inevitably also includes the question of agency) became one of the cornerstones of CDS. From this perspective, the excerpt offers some interesting findings. The sentence contains several examples of process nouns and nominalisation. Fairclough (2004) defines process nouns as "nouns with verb-like quality of representing processes and relations and so forth. [...] Nominalisation is a grammatical metaphor which represents processes as entities by transforming clauses (including verbs) into a type of noun" (ibid.: 220). In the excerpt, *risks*, *opportunities*, *activities* and *delay* are process nouns, while *consumption*, *regulations* or *production* are examples of nominalisation. Both process nouns and nominalisation entail the exclusion of social agents from the process they refer to and can thus lead to obliterating the agency and responsibility (ibid.).

From the excerpt it is not clear who is responsible for the regulations and whose activities might be affected by them. Although the most likely interpretation is that Toyota's business would be affected, an air of impersonality is adopted here to distance the corporation from this negative scenario.

I do not intend to suggest that process nouns or nominalisations are used only in those cases in which the corporation wants to distance itself from the message of the text. However, the excerpt is significant for the following reasons: it illustrates how the company can

deliberately adjust its role in accordance with its corporate ideology, emphasising or suppressing it through specific language constructions. It also stands in contrast to the way Toyota actively emphasised its agency elsewhere in the reports. Furthermore, the process of agency deletion through process nouns and nominalisation will be further evident in the way the corporation talks about the ecological problems (discussed below). For now, it seems that Toyota simply wants to distance itself from information or negative scenarios which deviate from the overwhelmingly positive and optimistic message constructed elsewhere in the reports.

So far the analysis has investigated the self-presentation of Toyota in the corpus. It has been shown that the reports primarily aim to present the company as actively taking steps to protect the environment. Inevitably, the analysis has also touched upon the discussion of the environmental problems, but the following sections will focus on this area further, examining in more detail the set of words which specifically refer to the representation of the environmental concerns. These are *environment*, *environmental*, *water*, *emissions*, *CO₂*, *recycling*, *Prius*, *hybrid*, *harmony with nature*.

4.3.3. *Environment/al*

Due to their morphological relatedness, the words *environment* and *environmental* will be discussed together. Tables 10 and Table 11 list their most frequent collocates.¹²

the	report
Toyota	issues
and	of
challenge	education
to	challenges
initiatives	plan
in	our
management	action
performance	promote
activities	with

Table 10: Top 20 collocates of *environmental*

the
water
and
on
month
global
Toyota
to
of
in

Table 11: Top 10 collocates of *environment*

¹² *Environmental*, being more than twice as frequent as the word *environment* in the corpus, displays a wider range of collocations; for this reason, the list of the most frequent collocates of *environmental* included here is longer.

Environment/al + Toyota

Toyota is a strong collocate of both words. *Environmental* collocates with *Toyota* primarily in the construction *Toyota Environmental Challenge* and *Toyota Action Plan* (discussed above, excerpts 1 – 9).

In case of *environment*, the phrase *Toyota (Global) Environment Month* re-occurs in the corpus (18 occurrences). It is in line with the dominant discourse strategy as it refers to another corporate activity positioning Toyota as an eco-conscious company:

51. *In line with the Japanese government's designation of the month of June as the Environment Month, Toyota also designated the month of June as **Toyota Environment Month** in 1973, and began to carry out a variety of environment-related employee education and awareness-raising activities.*

Environmental + management/ initiatives/ activities

The collocations *environmental management* (31 occurrences), *environmental initiatives* (41 occurrences), *environmental activities* (36 occurrences) and *environmental performance* (33 occurrences) also reflect the dominant goal to present the company in a positive light:

52. *Initiatives and specific items to be implemented in each area of corporate activities were formulated in order to further promote and strengthen **environmental management**.*
53. *Toyota was appraised for demonstrating its long-term commitment **to environmental initiatives**.*
54. *Toyota has strong bonds of trust with its dealers and distributors built on shared values for products and services, supporting a long history of collaborative initiatives in **environmental activities**.*
55. *We took initiatives to improve **environmental performance** in each region*

In some cases the reports go even further and portray Toyota as pushing forward the green transformation efforts:

56. *To further promote environmental initiatives, TNDAC encourages dealers to attain third-party certification of their **environmental management systems** and accelerate the development of environmentally conscious dealerships and human resources.*

57. *We request that our tier 1 suppliers to roll out [sic] **environmental initiatives** to their suppliers, and we seek to realize entire supply chain management in the pursuit of a sustainable society.*

However, the language of growthism is again present; although not very frequently, the reports show that for Toyota the discussion of the environmental problems is framed as an economical issue and the consideration of business risk and opportunities again colours the whole debate:

58. *Under this structure of **environmental management system**, Toyota is identifying **environmental risks and opportunities** that can **affect business operations** and is working for sustainable development in harmony with society toward the year 2050.*
59. *In order to steadily implement **environmental activities**, it is important that the management regards them as **business opportunities**, plans proper investments for environmental strategies.*

Environment/al + issues/ impact(s)

A more interesting picture arises if we look at the collocations with the words *issues* (31 occurrences) and *impact/s* (16 occurrences of *environmental impact* and 17 occurrences of *impact/s on the environment*). These two collocates were identified as salient not necessarily because of their strength; I believe that the presence of the word *issues* (listed in Table 10 as one of the strongest collocates of *environment*) deserves more attention as it is the only collocation with negative connotations encountered so far. This has led me to look at whether there are other collocates which could potentially carry more negative connotations (a similar process was applied to the collocation *our business* in section 4.3.2., the discussion of which was expanded by looking beyond the original collocation itself). It was expected that the current discussion of the environmental problems cannot fail to omit the negative nature of the ecological crisis. However, only the word *impact* was found among further collocates. For this reason, it was also investigated in more detail, although it is not listed among the strongest collocates (the word forms *impact* and *impacts* were listed as 24th and 25th strongest collocate of *environment*)

Before the investigation of the concordance lines, it was assumed that the collocations *environmental issues* or *environmental impact/s* would carry more negative discourse prosody. However, it turned out that in the reports the environmental issues are used by Toyota as an opportunity to promote its brand as a word-leading company which voluntarily tackles the ecological problems:

- 60. *Toyota has promoted a wide range of environmental initiatives **to address worsening global environmental issues.***
- 61. *Toyota's history of car manufacturing is also the history of persistently **addressing environmental issues.***
- 62. *Given that **environmental issues** are becoming more and more serious, meeting the challenges outlined in the new Toyota Environmental Challenge 2050 is becoming extremely important in order for Toyota to continue being a leading environmental company in the world.*
- 63. *The development of the first-generation Prius was Toyota's answer to how it could help the world cope with **resource and environmental issues** in the 21st century.*

The notion of environmental impact is conceptualized in terms of reducing the impact or having a positive impact:

- 64. *To **reduce the environmental impact** of its vehicles, Toyota has introduced the Eco-Vehicle Assessment System to prevent the environmental impact caused by End-of-life vehicles*
- 65. *We will **strive to reduce the environmental impact** of automobiles as close to zero as possible, and will roll out new initiatives towards a sustainable society looking to a positive impact on the earth and society.*
- 66. *Moving ahead, we will continue striving **to minimize impacts** on the water environment through the promotion of water-saving and recycling measures.*
- 67. *Our ideal goal has grown higher from Toyota's presence **will not impact environment** to Toyota's presence will **have a positive impact on the environment***

As a result, full and explicit acknowledgement of the severity of the ecological problems is rare. When it occurs in the reports, Toyota does so by providing an account of the specific environmental problems:

68. *Toyota has promoted a wide range of initiatives to address increasingly **severe global environmental issues, such as extreme weather phenomena attributed to greenhouse gas emissions, biodiversity depletion due to development, and water shortages caused by population growth.***

69. *The **impacts on the global environment** are becoming more serious. Social demands have also become stringent due to growing concerns on environment: **extreme weather phenomena attributed to: GHG emissions, aggravated air pollution in cities, water shortages due to population growth, resource depletion such as metals, fragmentation of ecosystem due to development progress, degrading biodiversity due to ecosystem changes and climate change.***

These excerpts represent a rare case in which the reports explicitly address the ecological issues themselves. What is striking about these accounts is that they again resort to the blurring of agency – the reports avoid stating the fact that the ecological problems are caused by humans. The agency behind the process is suppressed or indirectly implied (e.g. *population growth, social demands, development progress*), but the causal link is not made explicit. In the end, the impression could be that the problems are simply happening on their own. This is again achieved through nominalisation (e.g. *air pollution, resource depletion or ecosystem fragmentation*) or by using process nouns (*ecosystem changes, climate change, water shortage*) both of which delete the human agent from the process.

Similarly, extreme weather phenomena are described as *attributed to greenhouse gas emissions*. First, the choice of the word *attributed* could be seen as a hedging device which softens the argument that links the extreme weather to climate change. A certain degree of modality is applied here – that the extreme weather is likely to be caused by emissions

Second, the human agent is omitted as well – instead, *greenhouse gas emissions* are presented as the cause of the problem. Although it is true that emissions trapped in the atmosphere create climate change, the report fails to include the fact that it is humans and their activities that produce these emissions. Again, the human cause is logically implied, yet deemphasized.

Although (or mainly because) such excerpts are not very frequent in the corpus, they should not be regarded as less relevant. They confirm that valuable insights can be reached by comparing what is foregrounded against what is backgrounded. If we consider the above-mentioned tendencies, it is clear that the emphasis on the positive prosody (Toyota is actively protecting the environment) entails that negative data or information are given less

prominence. When the negative aspect is acknowledged, it is balanced out by an account of the actions taken to improve the situation or by obliterating the cause of the problem and together with it the issue of responsibility.

4.3.4. *Water*

Water is one of the most frequent words in the corpus relating to the environmental domain. From the list of its strongest collocates (Table 12) the words *usage*, *consumption* and *environment* were examined in more detail, as they reveal some interesting patterns.

water
usage
and
the
environment
to
quality
consumption
In
of

Table 12: Top 10 collocates of *water*

Water + usage/consumption

The collocations *water usage* (34 occurrences) and *water consumption* (30 occurrences) are treated as synonymous here, as the main tendency in the corpus is to emphasize that Toyota is aiming to reduce the amount of water it uses during the production process:

70. ***To reduce water usage** in our production activities, we have been working to introduce innovative technologies alongside planned upgrades to our production lines*
71. *...the input side, where we are **taking thorough measures to reduce water usage**, and the output side, where we are taking comprehensive measures to purify water.*

- 72. Toyota **has implemented various initiatives** such as collecting rainwater **to reduce industrial water usage**, cutting water usage in production processes, recycling wastewater to reduce amounts withdrawn from water sources...
- 73. TMC **continued activities to reduce water consumption** in FY2015
- 74. Globally, Toyota **is steadily implementing measures to reduce water consumption**
- 75. Our goal is to become the No. 1 regional plant by **taking measures to control water consumption volume**

It is interesting to note that in the reports water usage is conceptualized as one of the goals Toyota is working towards. The surrounding lexical environment implies positive discourse prosody, yet if we look closer at the individual examples, it is never stated that water usage was reduced. Instead, the excerpts often make use of the progressive aspect indicating that the action is in progress (such as *we have been working to introduce*, *we are taking thorough measures*) or the verbs are followed by positive sounding words such as *measures*, *initiatives* or *activities* which fail to specify whether the goal of reducing water usage was achieved. In fact, at one point the reports admit that the overall water usage actually increased:

- 76. Globally, Toyota **is steadily implementing measures to reduce water usage** according to the actual water environment in each country and region. However **total water usage rose** to 32.9 million m³ (up 0.4 percent year on year) **because of increased washing in pretreatment processing due to quality measures implemented in conjunction with model redesigns and process changes** [...] Moving ahead, **we will continue striving to minimize** impacts on the water environment through the promotion of water-saving and water recycling.

A careful reading thus shows that the reports might give a distorted account of reality. Despite the fact that Toyota emphasises its water reduction activities, the total water usage increased. To be able to achieve this two-faced representation, the company again shifts its agentive role, as was already shown above. As we can see from the excerpt (76), some clauses emphasize the agency and portray Toyota as an active actor (*Toyota is steadily implementing measures, we will continue striving to minimize impacts*) while other clauses resort to nominalisation and process nouns to background the agency in those cases which do not correspond to the overall picture Toyota is building for itself (*total water usage rose because of increased washing in pretreatment processing due to quality measure implemented in conjunction with model redesigns and process changes*). An intransitive verbal construction

(*water usage rose*) is also used, as a result of which the agent is not grammatically required. These sentences, occurring right next to each other, clearly illustrate how the company purposefully adjust its role so that it would fit its corporate ideology.

Water + environment/s

Another collocation worth examining is *water environment/s* (49 occurrences). The reports talk primarily about the impact on the water environment, yet, similarly to the collocation *impact + environment* discussed above, the impact is mostly discussed in neutral or positive terms:

- 77. ***we evaluate our impact on the water environment*** from a range of perspectives, including water volume and quality
- 78. Going forward, ***we intend to roll out a range of measures globally to deal with the water environment***, taking local needs into account.
- 79. ***we will continue striving to minimize impacts on the water environment*** through the promotion of water-saving and recycling measures.

In one case the negative scenario of the impact on the water environment is acknowledged:

- 80. As for water resources, although the details and extent of risks are different in each region of operation, ***if water is used in excess or if polluted water is discharged, there will be a huge impact on the regional water environment, and operations may not be permitted.***

However, Toyota again employs distancing strategies to suppress its role in the process. In this case the report resorts to agentless passive constructions (*if water is used in excess, if polluted water is discharged*), which are also identified by Fairclough (1996) as a one of the devices which can be used deliberately to obfuscate the agency. As a result, it cannot be established with accuracy that it is Toyota who would be responsible for the excess water usage or discharging the polluted water. The resulting impact is then presented through an existential construction (*there will be a huge impact*) which further blurs the causal link. Furthermore, the premodifier *huge* neutralizes the clearly negative side of such a scenario. At the same time, the corporate-centric perspective (*operations may not be permitted*) colours the discussion of the ecological problem.

The collocations of *water* thus clearly confirm tendencies encountered above, i.e. to background the role of the company in order to preserve its face. However, besides looking at the context in which the word occurs, we should perhaps ask another question: Why is water protection such a strong concept in the reports? The corpus might provide an answer for that at one point:

81. *Toyota was appraised for its water management including water risk reduction and for its information disclosure, resulting in being selected as one of the world's best eight companies in water management.*

It seems that water environment protection is one of the areas in which Toyota achieved success and it is for this reason that the reports frequently reiterate it as an example of Toyota's green activities. It is, of course, laudable that Toyota has successfully applied its water protection activities; on the other hand, the focus on water raises the question of why many of the other environmental issues are addressed to a smaller degree or not at all. The word *water* is even more frequent than *emissions* (discussed in the next section) which could be expected to be of primary concern to an automotive company. Looking at the frequency list of the corpus, other most frequent environmental concepts include *recycling* (157 occurrences as opposed to 293 occurrences of *water*), *conservation* (65 occurrences) and *biodiversity* (50 occurrences). On the one hand, the frequent reiteration of *water* is given by the nature of the industry (which uses water in its production) and by the fact that as a word *water* is generally more common than, for example, *biodiversity*. On the other hand, we need to bear in mind that the companies are free to decide which issues to address in their environmental reporting. We can see that the reports are highly selective, with certain topics being given prominence over the others to enhance the reputation of the company.

4.3.5. *Emissions and CO₂* ¹³

In comparison to *water*, the high prominence of words *emissions* and *CO₂* is not surprising, as the volume of emissions produced by cars is the most urgent problem the automotive industry has to deal with.

¹³ The AntConc programme lists *CO₂* as *CO*, not recognizing the number in the chemical formula. There are 259 occurrences of *CO* all together, including 7 instances of the abbreviation *Co*. (standing for *company*). However, all the other occurrences stand for *carbon dioxide*.

As can be seen from the lists of top collocates of *emissions* and *CO₂* (Tables 13 and 14), it is suitable to discuss the words together, as they form the strongest collocation (almost 200 occurrences), as a result of which they share a very similar range of further collocates.

CO₂
reduce
zero
to
reducing
tons
VOC
from
by
in

emissions
reduce
zero
reducing
to
by
challenge
in
and
from

Table 13: Top 10 collocates of *emissions*

Table 14: Top 10 collocates of *CO₂*

CO₂ emissions + reduce/reducing/reduced

The most frequent collocate of *CO₂ emissions* is the verb *reduce*. The collocations lists, however, suggest that *reduce* should be investigated as a lemma, rather than as a specific word form. The morphologically unmarked form *reduce* is the most frequent (43 occurrences), but its other forms *reducing* (23 occurrences) and *reduced* (5 occurrences) also appear as collocates and should therefore be considered.

Overall, the collocations with the lemma *reduce* demonstrate two tendencies. One is to talk about reducing emissions as an objective, without specifying the results achieved:

82. *In the area of logistics, we promoted kaizen measures **to reduce CO₂ emissions**.*
83. *Furthermore, we use every possible means **to reduce CO₂ emissions** including introducing an innovative process called karakuri that does not consume any energy source at all.*
84. *In addition to **reducing CO₂ emissions** in every stage of the vehicle lifecycle, the 2030 Milestone sets quantitative and qualitative milestones for other challenges.*

The reports talk mostly about making plans, taking measures and carrying out activities to reduce the emissions. The positive evaluation of the company is further underscored by

positioning the company as actively initiating these activities (*we use every possible means, we promoted kaizen measures etc*).

The other tendency is to provide detailed information about the volume of emissions reduced:

85. Furthermore, the joint transportation was expanded through yokoten to Toyota Industries Engine India (TIEI), **reducing emissions by an additional 232 tons per year**.
86. These measures eliminated the need for one 200-kW compressor, **reducing CO₂ emissions per unit produced by 0.11 kg**.
87. We transferred all the production parts stored at the Myochi Plant, located 11 km away from the Kamigo Logistics Center, to other plants starting August 2016 [...] This resulted in **reducing monthly CO₂ emissions by 4,562 kg**.
88. Cumulative electrified vehicle sales as of April 2018 have reached 12 million units, which **has reduced CO₂ emissions by 94 million tons**.
89. This shortening of transport distance succeeded in **reducing monthly CO₂ emissions by 9,123 kg in total**.

However, we can see that the reports rarely talk about the overall emissions performance, but rather discuss various sources of emissions (e.g. the production process, logistics, Toyota vehicles) separately; this makes it difficult to evaluate these in the bigger picture. In fact, when the data is provided in a wider context, it turns out that the emissions released by Toyota, despite the insistence on the reduction activities carried out, actually increased in some cases:

90. As a result, we managed **to reduce CO₂ emissions per unit produced to 0.398 tons (down 2.5 percent year on year), against total CO₂ emissions of 1.16 million tons (up 0.7 percent year on year)** [...] Nevertheless, because of increased production volumes, **we did increase CO₂ emissions to 7.87 million tons (up 4.1 percent year on year)**. Our **CO₂ emissions per unit produced was 0.747 tons (up 0.5 percent year on year)** due to lower productivity of some companies for model discontinuations and production line changes.
91. In FY2016, we continued fuel efficiency initiatives [...] **reducing CO₂ emissions per unit of workload (transported volume) to 105.2 g-CO₂/tkm (down 3.0% year on year)**. **CO₂ emissions from logistics operations totalled 0.282 million tons (up**

2.5 percent year on year), due largely to an increase in completed vehicles shipments in Japan.

92. In FY2018, we continued fuel efficiency initiatives [...] **reducing CO₂ emissions** per unit of workload (transported volume) to 104.2 g-CO₂/tkm (down 1.0 percent year on year). CO₂ emissions from logistics **operations totalled 0.286 million tons (up 1.4 percent year on year)**, due largely to an increase in completed vehicles shipments in Japan.

93. Through these activities, **CO₂ emissions were reduced** by 6,000 tons, **but** changes including an increase in long-haul transportation resulted in **total CO₂ emissions** of 275,000 tons.

At one point (90), the report explicitly admits that Toyota increased the amount of emissions produced and this is achieved by not erasing the company's agency (*we did increase CO₂ emissions to 7.87 million tons*), which is rare elsewhere in the reports. In other cases the message is made more opaque. The fact that emissions increased in comparison to the previous years is mentioned in brackets (*up ...% year on year*), while the intransitive construction *emissions totalled* again obfuscates the source of the agent responsible for the increase. When the source of the emissions is mentioned, the reports resort to agentless constructions (*due to lower productivity, due to an increase in completed vehicles shipment, changes including an increase in long-haul transportation*) which fail to identify the company as the agent behind these processes

Similarly, the excerpt 93 does not explicitly state that emissions were increased (only the total amount is given and the comparison to the previous years is missing), yet the use of the conjunction *but* seems to suggest that the second clause conveys information which contradicts the preceding clause. It is up to the reader to deduce the message underlying this statement.

The lexico-grammatical patterns of the cluster *CO₂ emissions* thus only further confirm the dominant discursive strategies – the agency of the company is deliberately adjusted and specific pieces of information (primarily the positive ones) are highlighted, while the negative information is backgrounded (if mentioned at all).

4.3.6. Recycling

Although *recycling* is the most frequent form of the word (157 occurrences), it was again looked into as a lemma (similarly to the verb *reduce* in the collocation *to reduce CO₂ emissions* discussed in the previous section) and its other morphological forms *recycled* (37 occurrences) and *recycle* (17 occurrences) were also considered. However, the less frequent forms *recycled* and *recycle* do not seem to introduce any new perspectives and only further contribute to the dominant narrative.

and
of
resource
society
based
vehicle
to
for
life
end

Table 15: Top 10 collocates of *recycling*

As could be expected from what has been encountered so far, the concept of recycling serves as a background for Toyota to further support its green image. *Resource recycling* is the strongest lexical collocation (20 occurrences) and we can see the emphasis on Toyota as the initiator and promoter of the resource recycling activities:

94. *To promote **resource recycling** for end-of-life vehicles, Toyota has developed structural designs that make it easy to dismantle and separate parts.*
95. *With regard to **resource recycling**, we deployed the “Waste oil, fluid, CFC/HFC proper Treatment Manual” on dismantling End-of-life vehicles overseas.*

The positive evaluation of the company is also evident from the collocation *recycling-based society* (21 occurrences):

96. *In order to realize an ultimate **recycling-based society**, we promote the Toyota Car-to-Car Recycle Project (TCCR)*

97. *Toyota aims to realize the ultimate **recycling-based society**, and promotes the Toyota Global Car-to-Car Recycle Project (TCCR) so that we can use resources from End-of-life vehicles for manufacturing new vehicles.*
98. *We will strive to establish **recycling-based societies** with proper End-of-life vehicle treatment and efficient resource collection by expanding the Toyota Global 100 Dismantlers Project gradually.*

In claims which might be seen as hyperbolic, Toyota portrays itself as the chief founder of “the ultimate recycling-based society”, although, in fact, it concerns itself only with vehicles or vehicles parts recycling.

The concept of recycling thus further strengthens the self-promotional strand of the reports, through which Toyota praises itself for actively protecting the environment. As a result, unfavourable information is downplayed (as was demonstrated in the discussion of *water* and *emissions* as well):

99. *Due to changes in the **recycling** market, however, a shift from selling recycling materials as valuable goods to paying for recycling and so on, the total volume of waste was 499 thousand tons (**up 5.3 percent year on year**), and the waste volume per unit produced was 47.4 kg (**up 5.4 percent year on year**).*

The amount of waste is simply stated (*the volume was ...*) and the fact that the volume increased is put into parentheses. Any explicit mention of the company as the producer of the waste is missing. Although the reports claim to be objective and based on data, the examples show that the way the data is presented can be manipulated through the language. The reports do not contain misinformation, but they prioritize certain facts over others to sustain the green corporate narrative.

4.3.7. *Harmony with nature*

The cluster *harmony with nature* was selected for being the most frequent 3-gram (49 occurrences) which explicitly reflects the ecological concerns. As it can be more difficult to generate collocates of a word cluster, the cluster was examined directly through a close reading of its concordance lines.

Similarly to the concept of sustainability discussed above (2.2.1.), it remains unclear what living in harmony with nature actually means for Toyota. From the reports it seems that the focus on the harmony with nature seems to be concerned mainly with forestation:

100. *Challenge of Establishing a Future Society in **Harmony with Nature**: If humans and nature are to coexist into the future, we need to conserve forests and other rich natural systems in all regions.*
101. *All-Toyota **Harmony with Nature** Working Group First Activity: Tree-planting at Millennium Hope Hills. The All-Toyota Harmony with Nature Working Group participated in the 4th Millennium Hope Hills Tree Planting Festival in Iwanuma City*
102. *In the Toyota Green Wave Project, afforestation at plants as a part of sustainable plant activities was expanded to **the Plant in Harmony with Nature Project***
103. *It is critical for humans to conserve forests and other natural environments in all regions for coexistence in **harmony with nature**. However, deforestation is progressing across the world, resulting in the fragmentation of habitats of diverse species, as well as the continuing loss of biodiversity.*
104. *At the Forest of Toyota, we will continue to hold programs which introduce the beauties of satoyama environments and living in **harmony with nature**.*

It seems that Toyota's interpretation of living in harmony with nature is rather selective. Similarly to the prominence of the word *water* discussed above, reforestation is singled out here as an issue that Toyota is addressing and thus gives it a large degree of attention in the reports. And although the importance of biodiversity is reiterated, other ecosystems are not mentioned. Toyota praises itself on its reforestation activities to such a degree that it commodifies and appropriates the ecosystem for its commercial branding, as the phrase *the Forest of Toyota* (excerpt 104) suggests.

The necessity of biodiversity protection is acknowledged, yet references to the problems as such are rarely made. In one case in which the problems are stated (excerpt 103 - *deforestation is progressing across the world, resulting in the fragmentation of habitats of diverse species, as well as the continuing loss of biodiversity*) the human cause is obliterated through the familiar devices, such as nominalisation (*deforestation, fragmentation*) and a process noun (*loss*). Deforestation is described as "progressing" as if it was progressing on its own, instead of being caused by humans.

We can also see that *Harmony with Nature* is used as a name for one of Toyota's projects (excerpts 101 and 102). This is another example of the way Toyota implements the green language into its corporate agenda to further green its operations (see more in section 4.3.1.).

Other uses of the cluster *harmony with nature* are more vague, failing to specify what principles living in harmony with nature should follow:

105. *We are going further with an aim to establish a future society in **harmony with nature**.*
106. *The main design concept is a technical center in **harmony with nature***
107. *Toyota Shirakawa-Go Eco-Institute will continue to develop new hands-on nature programs to nurture an awareness of living in **harmony with nature***

The fact is that the concept of living in harmony with nature is devoid of any concrete meaning. Appearing frequently in environmental discourses, the phrase could be regarded as a cliché – it is reiterated throughout the reports primarily because of its positively sounding nature, yet similarly to sustainability, the concept can be shaped to fit a particular ideology. Some could argue, for example, that living truly in harmony with nature would not involve any cars whatsoever. However, such a view is unlikely to be shared by a car manufacturer such as Toyota.

4.3.8. *Hybrid and Prius*

The words *hybrid* and *Prius* were selected as keywords salient for the Toyota corpus in comparison to the general reference corpus and to the corpus of reports published by the company LHMV. The words refer to the new range of eco-friendly cars produced by Toyota and were thus evaluated as worth further investigation, referring to the way the corporation addresses some of the environmental concerns.

vehicles
plug
electric
in
the
Toyota
system
of
vehicle
passenger

Table 16: Top 10 collocates of *hybrid*

the
generation
PHV
prime
launched
launch
first
fourth
in
new

Table 17: Top 10 collocates of *Prius*

The reports distinguish different kinds of electric vehicles, as the collocates of *hybrid* suggest (Table 16). These can be hybrid vehicles, hybrid plug-in vehicles and also fuel cell vehicles. Unsurprisingly, Toyota aims to praise its vehicles for their environmental performance and their contribution to a better environment:

108. *Toyota estimates its **hybrid vehicles** saved about 25 million kl of gasoline.*
109. *Now that customers around the world opt for **hybrid vehicles and other highly fuel-efficient vehicles**, it made possible for the automotive industry as a whole to contribute to addressing global environmental issues.*
110. *Toyota calculates that Toyota **hybrid vehicles** sold by March 31, 2016, have resulted in approximately 66 million fewer tons of CO₂ emissions than would have been emitted by gasoline-powered vehicles of similar size and driving performance*

The collocates of *Prius* (Table 17) show that Prius is praised for being the first hybrid car, which has now gone into its fourth generation. Unsurprisingly, the reports emphasize its technological innovation and environmental performance:

111. *Thus, we proceeded to develop the new **Prius** with the goal of improving both the global and social environments.*
112. *For example, the first generation **Prius** became the pioneer hybrid vehicle; the second generation was a pioneer in the hybrid vehicle popularization period; and the third generation was a pioneer in the era of broad market acceptance of hybrid vehicles.*
113. *The hybrid technologies in the new **Prius**, Toyota's first car adopting TNGA*2, won the Energy Conservation Grand Prize at the FY2016 Minister of Economy, Trade and Industry Award, the highest accolade from the sponsor, the Energy Conservation Center, Japan*

The impact these vehicles have naturally correlates with the number of the vehicle used. As a result, Toyota's hybrid cars are often discussed in terms of their sales:

114. *Today, thanks to many customers with expectations for this unknown car, we've reached a milestone with **sales units of 10 million** hybrid vehicles*
115. *Having reached **the milestone of selling 10 million hybrid vehicles**, Toyota is encouraged to keep striving to make ever-better cars for its customers.*

116. *Toyota hybrid vehicles' **global cumulative sales** exceeded 10 million units as of January 31, 2017 with tremendous support from customers around the world.*
117. *In addition to **the steady sales of hybrid vehicles** (HVs), the second-generation Prius PHV was launched to accelerate development and widespread adoption of plug-in hybrid vehicles (PHVs).*
118. *Toyota hybrid vehicles' **cumulative global sales** have reached 8.90 million units as of March 31, 2016*
119. *We have greatly exceeded our **sales goal** for hybrid vehicles (HV) by developing HV technologies and by expanding the lineups and sales regions. Annual HV **sales surpassed** one million units in 2012 and **cumulative sales** have reached 8.9 million units (as of March 31, 2016).*

Although it is undeniable that the positive impact of the eco-cars grows with the number of these cars used, the pre-occupation with sales and sales goals shows again that for Toyota, the discussion of ecological problems does not occur only for the sake of the environment. The financial interests of the business underlie the environmental reporting and the environmental crisis is, in the perspective of the corporate ideology, approached as an opportunity for financial profit and business expansion.

The survival of the corporation is also emphasized by presenting the adoption of new technologies (hybrid cars) as a way to deal with the ecological problems. Despite the positive impact these cars might have as opposed to regular vehicles, it could be argued that the ecological crisis should be resolved by encouraging other means of mobility, rather than producing more cars. However, as the report openly admit, Toyota treats the “love” for cars and “love” for the planet as equal:

120. *The reason behind this announcement is our earnest wish to leave this beautiful planet, our hometown, to the next generation, and to create a future mobility society that is an environment-friendly, safe, happy, and fun place to be. In this period of great change, I would like to keep two “loves” in mind. Those are a love for cars and a love for hometown.*

Although it is urgent for us to reconsider the role of the environment, in Toyota's view cars should be treated with same degree of consideration. It remains to be seen whether such an approach will actually help to “leave this beautiful planet to the next generation”.

5. Conclusion

This thesis examined corporate environmental discourse, focusing on the language of environmental reports published by the car manufacturer Toyota. Following in the line of ecocritical discourse analysis, the research attempted to address the problem of aggravating environmental degradation by critically examining the discourse on the environment. In the light of the environmentalist critique, corporate environmental reports were identified as a suitable source of data for the analysis as corporations represent the current socio-economic conditions which are seen as contributing to the environmental destruction. At the same time, corporations occupy increasingly powerful positions and their discourses can significantly shape the larger public discussions and responses to the environmental problems.

For these reasons, the research aimed to investigate the language used to discuss the current ecological crisis and the corporation's role in this process. The analysis confirmed that the issue of agency and responsibility deserves scrutiny when it comes to the discursive representation of the ecological problems. It was shown that throughout its reports Toyota steps in and out of its agentive role in order to sustain a positive image of its business.

The primary strategy employed in the reports is to present the company as environmentally conscious, which is achieved by emphasising Toyota's agentive role in a wide range of processes aimed to tackle some of the ecological problems. A sentence such as "Toyota is engaging in steady water conservation activities" is a prototypical example of this strategy. In the reports the word *Toyota* (or its substitute *we*) often occupies the semantic role of an active doer and collocates with specific groups of verbs carrying positive discourse prosody. The use of verbal tenses (especially of the present continuous and present perfect) is also worth noting, as it situates the company's activities as relevant for the present moment and further enhances the importance and necessity of Toyota's activities.

The foregrounding of the ecological responsibility of the company is also manifested in the presence of the green language which is often used to label the company's complex structure of projects and activities. Through the implementation of the environmental buzz-words such as *green*, *sustainable* or *harmony with nature* into the company's operations, Toyota ostentatiously appropriates the green ideology and further builds up the company's eco-friendly identity.

The emphasis on Toyota's agency is, however, missing when the reports provide information which would shed a more negative light on the company (e.g. that the amount of water used in the operations increased despite the company's proclaimed efforts). In such cases, the company's role is backgrounded or completely omitted through language devices which delete the agent and thus distance the company from the process. Nominalisation, process nouns and also agentless passive constructions and intransitive sentences are employed to obfuscate the company's responsibility. A comparison of sentences such as "we will continue striving to minimize impacts on the water environment" (in which the agent is positioned as the doer) and "total water usage rose because of increased washing in pretreatment processing due to quality measures implemented in conjunction with model redesigns and process changes" (which deletes the agent through heavy nominalisation) makes the difference between the strategies used more clear. Although it cannot be argued that lexicogrammatical devices such as nominalisation are used for ideological purposes only, they stand in sharp contrast to the overwhelming emphasis on the company's agency demonstrated elsewhere in the reports. The analysis has thus confirmed Jaworska's finding that corporate environmental reports resort to a kind of "discursive grooming" (Jaworska, 2018), strategically opting for specific language choices which would sustain the particular agenda.

These findings clearly illustrate the promotional nature of environmental reporting, which aims primarily to boost the company's image in the eyes of its stakeholders. The foregrounding of the positive also entails that negative data and information are more difficult to find. As a result, the discussion of the environmental problems as such occurs very rarely in the reports. The severity of these problems is more or less acknowledged, yet they are seldom referred to in explicit terms. Moreover, the reports avoid stating the causal link between the environmental issues and human activity. The human contribution is never directly denied, but it does not seem to be explicitly acknowledged either. This is again achieved through nominalisation and process nouns – for example, the reports talk about "resource depletion" or "degrading biodiversity due to ecosystem changes and climate change", failing to include the fact that human activity is the main driving force behind these issues.

I argue that such representation is insufficient in that it fails to take a full and honest account of the environmental degradation as a human-induced process. Although more eco-friendly operations of corporations are naturally welcome, it seems that in the reports the environmental crisis is approached more as a marketing opportunity.

The preoccupation with the interests of the corporation can be also traced in the way Toyota's hybrid cars are offered as a solution to some of the ecological problems. The reports often discuss these cars in terms of their sales, which makes it more obvious that their adoption leads to the company's expanding and increasing its profit. In fact, in the reports Toyota repeatedly (and quite openly) frames the ecological problems as "business risks and opportunities", which shows that the manner of addressing the problems succumbs to the financial interests of the company. It is true that financial motivation can drive the company, as a profit-orient subject, to improve its environmental performance, but it also entails that the company can cease such activities if the financial conditions are less desirable.

In terms of methodology, the thesis has demonstrated the merits of the CADS approach which fuses the methods of CL with the aims of CDS. The quantitative methodology of CL, namely the investigation of frequency and keyness, proved to be efficient in clearly identifying the concepts the strength of which would be difficult to evaluate in a traditional manual analysis. At the same time, it was necessary to complement these findings with a more qualitative-based investigation of the collocations and the concordance lines. A detailed reading helped to situate the findings into context and reveal the patterns in which the individual words are embedded.

Although one of the reasons why the CADS approach was adopted here was its presumed objectivity (as opposed to traditional CDS), the methodological framework favoured by some of the CDS approaches was not completely disregarded either. Its focus on the way specific language choices can shape the representation of social actors (and the processes in which these actors are involved) helped to further enhance the interpretation of the findings.

Overall it could be said that the CADS approach is very effective when it comes to identifying those features which are more visible in the discourse. Consequently, its application can come across obstacles if the research wants to consider the more silent elements of the discourse (what is backgrounded or completely omitted). It was also shown that the environmental problems (and their clearly negative nature) are given less prominence in the reports, yet such conclusions could be reached because of the focus of the research question, the aim of which was to focus specifically on the representation of the environmental issues. Ultimately, there are always many other aspects which are not given due attention in the discourse. It seems that a researcher employing CL methods in discourse analysis might need to have a pre-conception as to which particular aspects might be omitted and interpret the frequencies in the light of these.

Lastly, it needs to be emphasized that this research investigated only the environmental reports published by Toyota. The thesis was restricted in its scope and as a result the range of data analysed was relatively small. Although the main findings correspond to the conclusions reached by other scholars (in that the reports are very “corporate-centric” and the issues of the environment are side-lined), they should not be seen as applicable to corporate discourse in general. For a fuller picture, I suggest that future research into the area should focus on different corporations and industrial sectors to see if major differences arise. It can be expected that the PR propaganda will be dominant in other corporate reports as well, but it would be interesting to compare whether the corporations resort to same language devices and strategies to persuade us of their environmental commitment.

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Résumé

Tato diplomová práce kriticky analyzuje korporátní diskurz o životním prostředí. Úvodní kapitola osvětluje výběr tématu, které reaguje na zhoršující se ekologickou krizi. Práce vychází z environmentalismu a jako jednu z hlavních příčin ekologické krize vidí současný socio-ekonomický systém, který upřednostňuje ekonomický růst na úkor životního prostředí. Z tohoto důvodu se práce zaměřuje na analýzu korporátního diskurzu – korporace reprezentují současný ekonomický systém a mnohé z nich přispívají ke zhoršování ekologické situace. Vzhledem k jejich silnému finančnímu postavení mohou také ovlivňovat, jak se ekologické problémy budou řešit. Jako vhodný zdroj dat jsou zvoleny korporátní výroční zprávy, ve kterých se korporace zabývají otázkou životního prostředí (tzv. environmental reports). Výzkum chce jazykovou analýzu diskurzu odpovědět na dvě otázky: jak korporace mluví o ekologických problémech a jak se ve vztahu k nim prezentují?

Kapitola 2 se zaměřuje na ekolingvistiku jako hlavní teoretické východisko výzkumu. Ekolingvistika rozvíjí myšlenku úlohy jazyka ve společnosti a soustředí se na vztah mezi jazykem a probíhající ekologickou krizí. Po krátké historii ekolingvistiky jako vědního směru jsou popsány tři směry ekolingvistického badání, přičemž největší pozornost je věnována tzv. ekokritické diskurzivní analýze (ECDA), ze které práce čerpá. ECDA kriticky zkoumá diskurzy o životním prostředí, neboť ty mohou dále formovat to, jak se k životnímu prostředí chováme. Kapitola se dále zabývá i korporátním diskurzem, který je v práci analyzován. Korporátní diskurz je definován jako nástroj PR, pomocí kterého si korporace vytváří svůj společenský obraz, což se projevuje i ve výročních zprávách zaměřených na životní prostředí. Dosavadní výzkum zaměřený na tyto zprávy potvrzuje, že ve zprávách jsou upřednostňovány zájmy společností a ekologickým problémům jako takovým je věnováno méně pozornosti.

Kapitola 3 popisuje data a metodologii. Data byla sebrána z posledních tří zpráv publikovaných společností Toyota. Jako jeden z největších automobilových výrobců Toyota reprezentuje automobilový průmysl, jehož negativní vliv na životní prostředí je často zmiňován. Kapitola popisuje zpracování dat, která musela být z původního formátu zpráv zkopírována do jiného souboru, přičemž během tohoto procesu byla pro analýzu vybrána pouze ta data vhodná pro zvolenou korpusovou metodologii. Výsledkem zpracování dat je korpus obsahující 52 832 slov.

Metodologicky práce vychází z tzv. CADS (corpus-assisted discourse studies) přístupu, který kombinuje cíle diskurzivní analýzy s metodami korpusové lingvistiky a díky použití kvantitativních metod umožňuje vyvážit ideologické podbarvení tradiční kritické diskurzivní

analýzy. V metodologické části jsou popsány jednotlivé kroky analýzy. Prvním krokem je vygenerování nejčastějších slov a 3-gramů, které poukazují na hlavní koncepty diskutované ve zprávách. Dále jsou vygenerována klíčová slova korpusu, a to pomocí porovnání analyzovaného korpusu s všeobecným referenčním korpusem *BNC written* a korpusem výročních zpráv od společnosti LVMH. Ze seznamů nejčastějších a klíčových slov jsou pak vybrána slova, která se vztahují k výzkumné otázce (tzn. jak korporace zobrazují sebe a environmentální problémy). Posledním krokem je analýza kolokací a konkordančních řádků, ve kterých se vybraná nejčastější a klíčová slova vyskytují. Metodologická část se krátce věnuje i metodologickému přístupu tradiční kritické diskurzivní analýzy, která díky svému zaměření na reprezentaci sociálních aktérů doplňuje a dále posouvá interpretaci výsledků dosažených korpusovými technikami.

Kapitola 4 popisuje a interpretuje výsledky analýzy. Ze seznamu nejčastějších slov a 3-gramů (kapitola 4.1.) jsou vybrány výrazy *Toyota*, *we*, *our*, *environment/al*, *water*, *emissions*, *CO₂*, *recycling* a *harmony with nature*, z klíčových slov (kapitola 4.2.) pak *hybrid* a *Prius*.

Jednotlivé výrazy jsou zkoumány podrobněji analýzou kolokací a konkordančních řádků. Analýza se nejprve zaměřuje na slova *Toyota*, *we* and *our* (podkapitoly 4.3.1. a 4.3.2.), které jsou spojené s prezentací společnosti.

Slova *Toyota* a *we* se ve většině případů zaujímají sémantickou roli konatele, který aktivně ochraňuje životní prostředí. V roli podmětu se slova pojí se specifickou skupinou sloves, které vytváří pozitivní diskurzivní prozodii a zobrazují tak společnost v dobrém světle. To je podpořeno i častým použitím předpřítomného a přítomného průběhové času, které vztahují aktivity k přítomnému okamžiku a zobrazují Toyotu jako společnost, která aktivně řeší současné ekologické otázky. Další kolokáty slova *Toyota* vykazují použití tzv. green language (např. ve slovech *green* či *sustainable*), který také dále navozuje pocit, že společnost je ekologicky uvědomělá. Častý spoluvýskyt zájmena *our* se spojením *business risk and opportunities* však poukazuje na to, že pro Toyotu je diskuze a řešení ekologických problémů podmíněno ekonomickými zájmy.

V podkapitolách 4.3.3.–4.3.8. jsou rozebrány zbývající výrazy *environment/al*, *water*, *emissions*, *CO₂*, *recycling*, *harmony with nature*, *hybrid* a *Prius*, které odkazují na ekologické záležitosti. Nejzajímavější poznatky ohledně slov *environment/al* jsou kolokace se slovy *impact* a *issues*. Ačkoliv se předpokládalo, že tato spojení budou mít hlavně negativní diskurzivní prozodii, Toyota ve zprávách zdůrazňuje, že svůj dopad na životní prostředí snižuje. Přestože spojení *environmental issues* je poměrně časté, o konkrétních ekologických

problémech jako takových se mluví zřídka. Ve dvou případech se v souvislosti s touto kolokací vyskytuje výčet konkrétních ekologických problémů, ty jsou však zobrazeny jako samovolně probíhající procesy a jejich původ v lidské činnosti není v textu jasně zmíněn. Toho je dosaženo zejména použitím tzv. process nouns (podstatných jmen popisujících nějaký proces) a procesu nominalizace. V obou případech není konatel/původce procesu jazykově vyjádřen.

Tato tendence se opakuje i u slov *water*, *CO₂ emissions* a *recycling*. Toyota ve zprávách klade důraz na své aktivity, které vedou ke snižování množství použité vody a vyprodukovaných emisí a odpadu. Detailnější čtení textového kontextu však ukazuje, že zprávy jsou selektivní, tzn. že zdůrazňují specifické úspěchy, avšak potlačují informace, které by pro společnost vyznívaly negativně. Pokud jsou negativní informace zmíněny, Toyota opět jazykově potlačuje svoji roli v daném procesu (pomocí nominalizace či intranzitivních sloves), což je v přímém kontrastu s tím, jak ve většině zpráv svou úlohu vyzdvihuje.

Spojením *harmony with nature* Toyota deklaruje, že chce žít v souladu s přírodou, ze zpráv však vyplývá, že se jedná o prázdný koncept použitý zejména kvůli pozitivní diskurzivní prozodii a ve výsledku není jasné, co konkrétně znamená. Slova *hybrid* a *Prius*, odkazující na hybridní auta Toyota, jsou často diskutována ve spojení s jejich prodejem. Tato tendence opět poukazuje na finanční zájmy korporace, která svá auta prezentuje jako řešení ekologických problémů.

Závěrečná kapitola 5 shrnuje poznatky výzkumu. Hlavním zjištěním bylo, že ve výročních zprávách Toyota pomocí různých jazykových prostředků zdůrazňuje nebo naopak popírá svou roli, přičemž při výskytu negativních informací se od nich společnost distancuje. To platí i o ekologických problémech, u nichž není v textu jasně deklarovaná jejich spojitost s lidskou činností a všeobecně se o nich mluví zřídka. Tento poznatek ukazuje, že v diskurzivní analýze je důležité zvážit i to, co je v diskursu potlačeno, popř. zcela vynecháno. Co se týče metodologie, práce demonstruje přínosy využití technik korpusové lingvistiky ke (kritické) diskurzivní analýze.